THE HISTORY OF *CORNELIA.*

LONDON:

Printed for A. MILLAR, opposite to *Katharine-Street*, in the *Strand.*

M. DCC. L.

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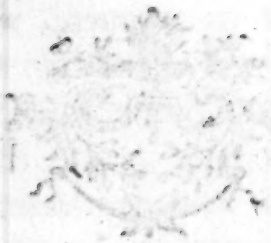

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WORKS of imagination, that have a tendency to inculcate, illuſtrate or exemplify morality, have always met with the approbation of the good and judicious part of mankind; while compoſitions of a contrary tendency, however profitable to their authors, or venders, have been looked upon with juſt deteſtation. The following hiſtory will, we flatter ourſelves, be allowed to contain ſeveral intereſting ſituations and incidents, which may agreeably and innocently amuſe the fancy of the reader; while the ſentiments interſperſed may, if not inſtruct in the knowledge, yet animate in the practice of, virtue. As ſuch, we have ventured the publication of this ſmall piece; hoping, from the reader's candor, that any inaccuracies will be overlooked for the ſake of the intention, which appears throughout the whole performance.

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WORKS of imagination, that have a tendency to inculcate, illustrate, or exemplify morality, have always met with the approbation of the good and judicious part of mankind; while compositions of a contrary tendency, however profitable to their authors, or venders, have been looked upon with just detestation.

The following history will, we flatter ourselves, be allowed to contain several interesting situations and incidents, which may agreeably and innocently amuse the fancy of the reader; while the sentiments interspersed may, if not instruct in the knowledge, yet animate in the practice of, virtue. As such, we have ventured the publication of this small piece; hoping, from the reader's candor, that any inaccuracies will be overlooked for the sake of the intention, which appears throughout the whole performance.

No. 46

THE HISTORY OF CORNELIA.

CORNELIA was born of one of the moſt diſtinguiſh'd families in France. Her parents had been long married without having had a child; they lived in that conſtant yet varying bliſs to be found only in the enjoyment of the moſt delicate affection, and moſt perfect mutual eſteem and confidence. But as neither could with tranquility, think that the other wanted any thing to complete the moſt perfect happineſs that human nature can enjoy, ſo both received inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, when appearances ſeemed to promiſe that this bleſſing would be added to thoſe they already poſſeſſed. The lady flattered herſelf with the hopes of bringing into the world, a copy of the virtues of her huſband's mind, and of the graces of his perſon; and that her beloved lord would feel all the pleaſures of a father, in a ſon that would perform all filial duties, not from conſtraint but love; and

that in this image of himſelf, he would eſteem thoſe virtues as highly as they deſerved, of which, while he was the only poſſeſſor, humility made him think meanly. Her fond fancy repreſented this ſon, making ſome woman as happy as ſhe herſelf was made by his father; and like him alſo, making all that depended on him through love, or by menial ties, as eaſy as humanity, benevolence, generoſity, and affection, could make them. Her lord gave no leſs ſcope to his imagination. He fancied he ſaw the child whoſe birth they longed for, adorned with all the virtues which, by female delicacy and ſweetneſs, were made ſo amiable in the object of his tendereſt love; and graced with beauties correſponding too well to the lovely mind within, to be robbed of their charms by age, or diminiſhed in their value by poſſeſſion. Thus each rejoiced in imaginary pleaſures, little knowing the fatal conſequences that were to attend the expected bleſſing. That which appeared an additional tie, diſſolved their union, and his happineſs was deſtroyed by that which promiſed its increaſe: for at the time Cornelia entered the world her mother left it.

It would be impoſſible to deſcribe Monſ. de * * * 's grief. Though nature, his own diſpoſition, and what was ſtill more, the relation and reſemblance the infant bore to the object of his conſtant love, diſpoſed him to all the exceſs of paternal tenderneſs; yet he conſtantly found how unequal this affection was to that which he had felt for his ſoul's companion; for whom reaſon had been the foundation of a love which had indeed riſen to all the heights of paſſion, without having been mixed with any of its faults.

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He had formerly choſen a retired life to preſerve his happineſs unintruded upon, unwilling to have his thoughts taken off from the contemplation of truth, and the enjoyment of domeſtic pleaſure. Grief, though an oppoſite cauſe, had the ſame effect, but in a greater degree. From retired, he became recluſe, courting ſolitude, to avoid all interruption of the melancholy diſpoſition of his mind, which made him incapable of amuſement He was perſuaded that the world could now have no real pleaſures in ſtore for him. His portion of happineſs, though ſhort, had been far beyond what falls to the ſhare of the greateſt part of mankind. But his bleſſings were now all changed into misfortunes. The birth of his child, had deprived him of the beſt and moſt amiable of wives. The felicity he had enjoyed with her, was ſucceeded by endleſs regret; and the ſtrength of his conſtitution was become an evil, as it prolonged his being; and by retarding the progreſs of undermining grief, reduced him to endure for many years an affliction which no time could abate.

His miſery however did not make him neglectful of his Cornelia: he was too juſt to diſregard the innocent, though the cauſe of his unhappineſs. His retirement afforded him much leiſure, and he employed it for her improvement, which became his whole ſtudy. His amuſement was reading with her, explaining what ſhe read; and teaching her muſic, of which he was a perfect maſter. All his joy was to obſerve her progreſs, and the charming reſemblance ſhe bore to her mother. By his extraordinary care, the quickneſs of her underſtanding, and her unwearied application, ſhe had arrived at a tho-

rough knowledge of religion and morality, a great inſight into hiſtory, natural philoſophy, and ſeveral of the ſciences, and to very great ſkill in muſic and other external accompliſhments, before ſhe had the misfortune to loſe the beſt of fathers. He, at length, conſumed by grief, left the world with joy, truſting in his daughter's ſenſe and prudence, for the regulation of her conduct; and depending on the aſſiſtance of his brother Octavio, to whoſe care, on his death-bed, he had bequeathed her, as to one whom he had had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing extremely fond of his Cornelia, and greatly beloved and reſpected by her.

She was now arrived at the age of ſixteen, and was endowed with all the charms of youth and beauty, accompanied with the moſt amiable vivacity. Her ſituation was in ſome meaſure dangerous. For though the great fund of reaſon and virtue with which ſhe was bleſſed, would certainly preſerve her from doing any thing eſſentially wrong; yet the little knowledge ſhe had of the world, might expoſe her to cenſure, by making her neglect ſeveral things conſecrated by cuſtoms and prejudices, of which ſhe was ignorant. Her father's whole care had been to cultivate her underſtanding and virtue; and he had left her as ignorant of the manners of the world, as ſhe was of her own family There was ſcarce a good author among the Greeks, Romans, or moderns, with whom ſhe was not acquainted; but ſhe knew not her relation to any one, but her uncle, who was almoſt the only perſon beſides her father, with whom ſhe had ever converſed, excepting the poor, whom the charitable-

charitableneſs of her diſpoſition had introduced to her obſervation.

Octavio endeavoured to prevail on her to quit her retirement and accompany him to court, where her age and beauty ſeemed to call her. But the affliction ſhe was under, the conſciouſneſs of her ignorance of the cuſtoms of the world, her diffidence of herſelf, the love ſhe had for reading, and above all the uſes to which ſhe had deſtined her fortune, made her reſiſt the perſwaſions of her beloved uncle. He was too fond of her, to refuſe himſelf the pleaſure of ſtaying ſome time with her, and to try to alleviate her grief by his conſtant attention and tenderneſs. But at length he was obliged to return to court, the king, whoſe chief favourite he was, growing impatient at his abſence.

Cornelia at firſt found all the pains of ſolitude which ſhe had never before felt, having always enjoyed the company of thoſe that were deareſt to her. But as ſhe had in herſelf and in her amuſements a continual reſource, ſhe ſoon bore it as well as her tender and affectionate heart would permit, after the loſs of ſo excellent a father. Octavio had put her into the immediate poſſeſſion of her whole fortune, which enabled her to increaſe thoſe charities that had before, with the indulgence and approbation of her father, been her greateſt pleaſure. She denied herſelf all ſuperfluous expences, looking upon them as bad, tho' common means, of defrauding the poor; ſhe conſidered, with compaſſion, the diſproportion in fortune between the low and great, and tho' ſhe ſaw the neceſſity of ſubordination, yet ſhe grieved to ſee it ſo often accompanied by extreme poverty. She thought thoſe who were

prevented by the gratification of their vanity, from leſſening that inequality, by a communication of their wealth, little leſs criminal than thoſe who were with-held by hard heartedneſs and avarice. Deſirous of removing ſuch evils as came within her power to redreſs, ſhe employed almoſt all her fortune in aſſiſting the poor, tho' with ſuch judgment and œconomy, that ſhe gave no encouragement to idleneſs. Being convinced that virtue was not to be found with the ſlothful, induſtry was not leſs neceſſary than poverty, to intitle the healthy to her benevolence. By being ſparing in her expences upon herſelf, ſhe had ſufficient to relieve all the neceſſitous that came within her knowledge. She gave eaſe and content to the old, attendance and competence to the ſick, encouragement and all uſeful aſſiſtance to the young; and by this was made as much happier than thoſe who were the objects of her charity, as the pleaſures ariſing from the riches of the mind, excell thoſe reſulting from pecuniary poſſeſſions.

Octavio by frequent viſits enlivened her ſolitude, and by the kindeſt behaviour endeavoured to endear himſelf to her, and to make every thing elſe more agreeable, by the ſatisfactory aſſurance of being poſſeſſed of a ſincere and tender friend, whoſe advice might conduct her ſafely tho' a world, where every ſtep was dangerous to one ſo artleſs and innocent. But this happineſs did not laſt above a year. Octavio had conceived an early paſſion for her, even when ſhe ſeemed too young to inſpire any. Little uſed to controul his inclinations, he neither weighed their juſtice nor conſequences; but only conſidered the way to ſucceed in them: what he gained

gained by aſſiſting the vices of his maſter, he ſpent in the gratification of his own. By this he created leſs ſurprize than envy; the unworthy way in which he laviſhed his wealth, was too conſiſtent with the baſe manner in which he obtained it, to cauſe wonder in any; for as virtue will never permit a man to be either rapacious or a ſycophant, what is got by ſuch means can never be ſpent in its cauſe. Tho' all blamed the favourite, many wiſhed to imitate him; but he was too artful, and of too much uſe to the king's vices to loſe his favour, as well as too vigilant in the purſuit of his own pleaſures, to neglect any of his advantages. He had made frequent viſits to his brother, from the firſt moment he found himſelf enamoured of his daughter. That good man, living too retired to hear any of the juſt cenſures caſt upon Octavio, did not doubt of his being as nearly allied to him in merit as in blood. The truſt repoſed in Octavio by his brother when he lay on his death bed, greatly raiſed the hopes of that wicked man. Theſe being founded only on Cornelia's innocence, could be but ſmall while ſhe was under the care of one, ſo able to inſtruct her in what was to be feared, from the vices which the purity of her own heart make her incapable of ſuſpecting in another's. His firſt care was to gain her eſteem and affection, by the ſtrongeſt proofs he could give of his own, under ſuch reſtrictions as could not raiſe the leaſt ſuſpicion in her. He ſucceeded ſo well in this, that no one had ever a more tender friendſhip for another, than Cornelia had for Octavio. She felt for him all the ſentiments that ariſe in the beſt of hearts, had the higheſt opinion of his merit, and an abſolute reliance on him.

But theſe were not all the ſentiments he wiſhed to raiſe. A woman of ſenſe and virtue, however great her ignorance or innocence may be, will always know how to repell vice as ſoon as ſhe perceives it; ſhe is only ſlower in ſuſpecting it than thoſe, who being conſcious of it in their own hearts, are therefore the more ready to believe it in others. Octavio had often expreſſed his love for her, in terms more warm than ſhe thought neceſſary or natural between one friend and another; but ſhe for a long time attributed this to his having, in general, a more ſtrong and eager manner of expreſſing himſelf than ſhe had. His exceſſive praiſes of her perſon and underſtanding, ſhe imagined to proceed from nothing more blamable than partiality; a fault, indeed, but one of which ſhe had no right to complain; and, to ſay the truth, malice would have acquitted him of the imputation of flattery, tho' her modeſty would not, as no commendation could exceed her merit.

Octavio finding that calm reaſon accompanied her affection towards him, as well as all her actions, determined to try every method of bringing her into a diſpoſition fitter to bear his love. Among other things, he tried to ſoften her by ſuch books as were fitteſt for the purpoſe; and accordingly gave her plays, romances, and poetry; a ſort of reading ſhe had not been uſed to. Her father, unwilling to cultivate a tenderneſs of heart that was born with her, and which he had found in himſelf attended with ſuch cutting pangs, had never let her ſoften her mind with ſuch ſtudies. Content with the virtue founded on reaſon, true religion, and benevolence, he did not wiſh ſhe ſhould learn the boaſted ſentiments

of

of poetry and romance. The chief aim of her uncle's converſation, whenever he could find an opportunity, was, to inſtill into her mind a belief, that neither reaſon, nor religion, made nearneſs of kindred an objection to any ſort of alliance, but that all thoſe laws had been made out of political views.

One day he found her in tears for the imaginary diſtreſſes of ſome perſon in one of the books he had given her. He thought he could not find a more favourable time to declare his paſſion, flattering himſelf that ſhe who could weep for the ſuppoſed misfortunes of one who ſubſiſted only in a writer's imagination, would be unwilling to make him unhappy for whom ſhe had the ſincereſt friendſhip; little conſidering that thoſe who have the moſt compaſſion for virtuous love, may have the leaſt pity for a vicious paſſion. He perſuaded her to take a walk with him. He ſoon turned the converſation to the favourite ſubject, and trying, as he called it, to reaſon her out of her prejudices, uſed as his chief argument, that if an union with thoſe neareſt to us in blood was unnatural, we could love no one within thoſe degrees, as the affections are the gifts of nature. As ſhe was beginning to ſhew him, that he confounded depraved nature with the more perfect, and that he might by the ſame argument maintain every vice, and every crime that is any where committed, to be right; his paſſion, inflamed beyond bounds by the long conſtraint he had kept it under, deprived him of all his caution and diſſimulation, and he ſtoped her reply, by crying out, it was blaſphemy to ſuppoſe it a crime for him to love his Cornelia; could the nearneſs of blood make him leſs ſenſible of her charms, or make it

wrong in him to doat on her to diſtraction, who alone deſerved ſuch exceſs of paſſion? He would not live but for hopes of, one day, ſeeing her ſoul united to his in real ties, and not only by thoſe imaginary bonds with which prieſts ſhackle the vulgar.

Fear and aſtoniſhment rendered her immoveable. He then caught hold of one of her hands; ſwore nothing was dear to him in life but her; reminded her of the affection he had alwa s born her; of all his care and tenderneſs; and in return he only begged, if ſhe would preſerve him from immediate death, that ſhe would permit him, at leaſt, to talk of love, to tell her how long, how conſtant, how ardent his paſſion had been, and to pity, if not reward it; that he aſked no more, and would pay obedience to the ſtricteſt rules her cruelty could impoſe, provided ſhe would not baniſh him her preſence, or forbid him to ſpeak of the only ſubject of his thoughts: unleſs ſhe granted this, he vowed he would never riſe from the earth, but end there a life, which, without that permiſſion, would be inſupportable to him. If impatience for her anſwer had not ſtoped him, he might have talked much longer, before ſhe recovered herſelf enough to anſwer him; ſhe could ſcarcely believe her ſenſes did not deceive her. It appeared incredible that an uncle could talk in this manner to a niece; tho' he had often of late kiſſed her hands, and preſſed her in his arms, which actions, tho' accompanied with expreſſions of fatherly fondneſs, had ſurprized her, and made her alter her behaviour from that eaſy freedom ſo natural to the unſuſpicious. As ſoon as ſhe was able to ſpeak, ſhe beged him not to cancel, by ſuch diſcourſes, the obligations ſhe had

had to him; ſhe told him, that if what he ſaid was truth, he ought to avoid all opportunities of ſeeing her, till he could do it innocently; that ſhe could never more bear the ſight of him, if he let the leaſt ſigns of ſo criminal a paſſion appear; as great as her affection had been for him, it ſhould never ſerve as a foundation to build a crime upon; that friendſhip ſprung from virtue, and could never give riſe to any thoughts that were not virtuous; that the love muſt be of a very worthleſs ſort, which could lead a perſon to attempt to injure the object of it; that the regard which was not placed on her virtues ſhe muſt deſpiſe; and if his aroſe from them, was it poſſible he ſhould wiſh to put an end to their exiſtence? That if baſe ſelfiſh views were the cauſe of his fondneſs, ſhe ſhould be very unhappy; but never ſo much ſo, as when he inſulted her by expreſſions of a deteſtable paſſion. She entreated him to return inſtantly to court, and never ſee her again, who would think herſelf in ſome degree criminal, by having inſpired him with any thoughts that were ſo: ſhe inſiſted on his letting go her hands, and on his not accompanying her; but leaving her the liberty of endeavouring to compoſe the anxiety of her mind, before ſhe was ſeen by her family.

Octavio found by her manner, as well as by her words, that he had little reaſon to hope another enterview, and therefore reſolved not to let this end ſo ſoon; but to try all his power to make her reverſe her ſentence. He wept, he begged, he entreated, and uſed all the arts in which long practice had made him ſkilful; 'till finding that nothing but his ſuperior ſtrength kept her with him, and that indignation at his

repeated addreſſes took the place of grief in her mind, his paſſion was heightened by the repulſe, he ceaſed from all ſoft endeavours to move her, and attempted by force to make her ſit down on the graſs with him. But chance bringing ſome of the neighbouring labourers that way, ſhe took this opportunity of getting free from him. She called them to her, on pretence of enquiring after one of their relations who was under her care; and directing her ſteps homewards, led them on by her queſtions till ſhe was within ſight of her own houſe.

Her conſtitution was not ſtrong enough, to bear unhurt the perturbation her ſpirits had been in; ſhe was immediately taken extremely ill, and continued ſo for ſome days; tho' ſhe received a little eaſe of mind from hearing that her uncle went away the day after this unhappy adventure. The exceſſive grief ſhe felt at finding one whom ſhe loved and eſteemed ſo tenderly deſerved nothing from her but hatred and ſcorn, had too much effect on her health to admit of a ſpeedy recovery; yet her youth and natural ſtrength prevailed, and in a little more than a week her uneaſineſs began to abate.

This remiſſion was of ſhort duration; the firſt night ſhe had got into a quiet ſleep, ſhe was awakened by a great noiſe of horſemen riding into the court. She gave the alarm to her ſervants, and making them charge what fire-arms were in the houſe, bid them make the beſt defence they could. By a bell they communicated the alarm to the neighbours, who were too ſtrongly attached to one who contributed ſo much to preſerve their lives in peace and plenty, not to repair immediately to her defence. Part of them had

no ſooner entered the houſe, than it was inveſted, and threatened to be attacked, if admittance was not granted them directly. As this was refuſed, they began to try to break open the door, but they received ſo many ſhot from the windows, as made them fear they ſhould find men able to defend themſelves, and to obſtruct their entrance when they came to fight nearer. This for ſome time abated the vigor of the attack. Cornelia ordered one of her ſervants to aſk, if want of money tempted them to come there; if ſo, they ſhould have all ſhe had in the houſe, for ſhe could not think any ſum worth venturing the life of one man. But the fear which had at firſt riſen in her mind was confirmed by the anſwer ſhe received, that they wanted admittance and not money; and promiſed they would do harm to no one if they would but permit them to take ſhelter there that night.

She was ſoon put out of all doubt as to the perſon who had ſent them, and as to their intention, by the diſcovery of Octavio's favourite ſervant by his voice, which was very particular, and was heard and obſerved by many. This made her more than ever ſenſible of the danger ſhe was in; ſhe found herſelf expoſed almoſt inevitably to every thing ſhe could fear: her ammunition was nearly ſpent, and ſhe could not hope that her people would be long able to defend her from the force of men ſo much better armed; and their guide and commander was too well acquainted with all parts of the houſe, to leave her any poſſibility of concealing herſelf in it. Death appeared in her preſent ſituation ſo ſmall an evil, that her greateſt wiſh was thereby to be preſerved from falling into the hands of a man ſhe dreaded much

much more. She made one of her men lend her his cloaths, and dreſſing herſelf in them, went to the door that was moſt ſtrongly attacked, hoping either to be killed at their entrance, or by her diſguiſe to eſcape their ſearch. She had been there but a little time before the door was broke down; they ruſhed in immediately, without depriving her of life, or having left the outſide of the houſe ſo unguarded as to give her the power to make her eſcape. Her terror was now compleat; ſhe began then to fear that not finding her, they would ſuſpect ſome diſguiſe, and by a narrow examination of all the perſons in the houſe, diſcover her.

But providence, watchful over the innocent, ſaved her in the midſt of her deſpair; before the ruffians had ſearched all the houſe for her, ſuch of the neighbours as could not get in before it was beſet, having gone to a gentleman's who lived not far off, increaſed their numbers by his ſervants, and by ſome others in his neighbourhood; and having got a good number of arms, they returned to try what they could do towards Cornelia's aſſiſtance. They ſoon made their way thro' thoſe who were left to guard the outſide of the houſe, and entering it followed the ruffians up ſtairs, where they fell upon them, and would have made great ſlaughter among them, had not Cornelia, who joined this little army, reſtrained their juſt fury. However, in ſpite of her endeavours, many were wounded, tho' none were killed on the ſpot. The banditti being forced to ſubmit, and beg for quarter; it was readily granted them, with leave to go unmoleſted out of the houſe, on condition, they left the country as expeditiouſly as poſſible.

None

None of Cornelia's defenders had received wounds of any conſequence; to do them harm was not the deſign of thoſe that had attacked them. She rewarded them greatly for their faithful aſſiſtance, and kept a number of them in the houſe to defend her, in caſe any new occaſion offered, before ſhe had found out ſome more ſecure way of avoiding the dangers that threatened her.

She was in the utmoſt perplexity what courſe to take; her uncle was ſo great a favourite at court, that if he choſe to make uſe of his maſter's power, he might take ſuch meaſures, as muſt at once put an end to all her hopes of being defended from him. Her attendants were full of aſtoniſhment; they found the deſign was to carry her off, but why, or to whom, they could not gueſs, nor how her uncle's ſervant came to be concerned in ſuch a piece of villainy. For Octavio had given ſuch good and kind reaſons for not taking leave of her before he left her houſe, as prevented all ſuſpicion of their not continuing on the ſame friendly and affectionate terms as they had always been.

Cornelia was ſenſible ſhe could find no ſafety at home; and yet where could ſhe fly? But the neceſſity of the caſe made her determine, at all events, to leave her own houſe, as the moſt unſafe place in which ſhe could poſſibly be. She ſaw a thouſand difficulties and diſtreſſes before her, but none that could incline her to hazard her innocence, where it might become a prey to the baſe views of ſo wicked a man. She reſolved to let no one ſhare a fate which threatened ſo many ſufferings, unleſs ſhe had better reaſons

to believe ſhe ſhould be at ſome time able to reward them.

Having fixed this reſolution, ſhe ſhut herſelf into her chamber, and began to prepare for her departure. Her firſt employment was to divide her money; great part of it ſhe ſealed up directed to the perſon, who of all her family ſhe could beſt truſt with an order how to diſpoſe of it among the poor; deſirous to leave them all ſhe could poſſibly ſpare, that they might be the longer before they ſuffered by her abſence, in caſe her uncle would not comply with the requeſt ſhe intended to make him. She then wrote him the following letter.

'WHEN this letter reaches you, I hope I 'ſhall be out of your power. The ſhocking attempt that was made to ſeize me in my 'own houſe, and which was too plainly by your 'orders, ſhew me the danger I am in while I am 'here, in too clear a light not to oblige me to 'remove my abode. Where I am going I know 'not, what will become of me, I am ſtill leſs 'able to gueſs. I ſhall take none of my ſervants with me, becauſe I will not make any 'one a ſharer in the difficulties, the poverty, and 'the other misfortunes that may attend me. I 'ſhall acquaint none of them with my departure; 'becauſe I would not ſubject them to your reſentment, nor myſelf to any evil conſequences 'by their fears of you; or by their treachery, 'if any of them ſhould be capable of ſo bad 'an action as diſcovering me. If ſuch a ſuſpicion be unjuſt, I hope I ſhall be excuſed it, on 'account of the diſappointment I have lately 'had where I had fixed my beſt opinion. If you

'have

'have the leaſt degree of true affection for me,
'or any ſoftneſs towards me that may give me
'the power of moving you to compaſſion, you
'muſt feel ſome compunction when you conſider
'to what you have reduced me. Young, un-
'uſed to the world, never expoſed to any hard-
'ſhips, I am now forced to encounter all the
'difficulties that attend poverty, perhaps indi-
'gence, in thoſe who have been bred up in eaſe
'and plenty. Obliged to leave the only place I
'ever inhabited, where I have ſpent ſixteen years
'in all the happineſs that a contented temper,
'the love of a country life, the power of grati-
'fying my own diſpoſition, and the kindeſt in-
'dulgence from the beſt of parents could afford
'me; obliged, I ſay, to fly from this place by
'the perſon who was bound by the ſtrongeſt ties,
'to defend me in the poſſeſſion of every thing I
'had a right to! But for this I deſerve little pity,
'in compariſon to what is due for the inex-
'preſſible grief I feel, at findin myſelf ſo miſ-
'taken in a man whom I looked upon as my
'parent, my friend, my inſtructor, my guide,
'my companion, and whom I loved with an
'affection equal to every one of theſe ties. How
'it grieves my heart to find it has miſplaced ſo
'much affection; and that one whom I thought
'poſſeſſed of every virtue, is ſo entirely devoid
'of any, no one can know, but thoſe who
'have a heart as tender as mine, and have
'ſuffered an equal diſappointment. But in-
'nocence is a comforter that will in time get
'the better of my uneaſineſs, and make me
'indifferent to ſuch as are unworthy of my re-
'gard. Perhaps they would be happy if they
'had any conſolation within their own breaſts;

'but

'but conſcience is their accuſer, and there is 'none ſo ſevere. I forget myſelf; my deſign 'in beginning, was neither to reproach you, nor 'to move your pity; it was only to beg that if 'you have any regard for me, you would not 'let others ſuffer with me. Let not the poor be 'impoveriſhed by my misfortunes; the greateſt 'part of my eſtate has hitherto been ſpent in 'relieving them, and if you will ſtill let it be 'employed the ſame way, I can in my heart 'forgive you the miſery you have brought upon 'me. You will find I have maintained a little 'ſet of old men and women, of whom I required 'that they ſhould teach all the children in the 'neighbourhood to read, write, work, and every 'thing of that ſort that was then, or might one 'day become uſeful to them, that by their knit-'ting and ſpinning, they ſhould ſupply them-'ſelves and moſt of the poor whom I cloathed, 'with all things that could be ſo provided them, 'and that they ſhould take care of ſuch children 'as I committed to them. I would beg that to 'theſe, their former allowance (of which the 'encloſed account of my paſt expences will 'inform you) may ſtill be continued; and the 'places of ſuch as die filled by others whoſe 'age, infirmities, and poverty intitle them to it. 'I muſt likewiſe wiſh that the yearly income I 'had ſet apart for the ſupport of orphans, or 'poor children, whoſe parents would part with 'them for a convenient ſum, may ſtill be em-'ployed in a conſtant ſucceſſion of them, and 'that till they are old enough to be put to ſer-'vice, or apprenticed, as convenience or their 'genius makes proper, they may ſtill be put 'under the care of the aforeſaid old women,

'divided

'divided equally among them as far as their 'healths will permit; becauſe emulation makes 'them the more careful of thoſe who are 'particularly their charge. Nothing ever gave 'me more pleaſure than this laſt article of my 'expences, as I thought that inſtead of a nuſance 'I ſhould make them of uſe to ſociety, and that 'I was as ſerviceable to their minds as to their 'bodies, which by the way of life they would 'have been bred to, would both have been in 'great danger of becoming curſes to them: 'eſpecially their minds, for they could not fail 'of being corrupted, and as they begin to be ſo, 'very young, I never took any that were above 'five years old. It was my cuſtom to ſend to 'every poor woman who lay in, every thing 'that could be of any comfort, eaſe or aſſiſtance 'to her and her new born child. I took upon 'me the proviſion of every ſeventh child that 'any poor perſon had, and paid the parents for 'that care of it, at the ſame price I muſt have 'done any other nurſe, and cloathed all if they 'had more than that number, which indeed I 'alſo did for many others that were poor. For 'all that were ſick I provided nurſes and other 'neceſſaries, and to every couple when they 'firſt married, I gave furniture for their houſes, 'and ſtocked them, as well as many who had 'been long married, with ſuch cattle and poul-'try, as might be a means of enabling them to 'maintain their families more comfortably. The 'few young girls whom I employed in the houſe, 'in embroidery and other kinds of work, are 'arrived at ſuch perfection, that it will be your 'intereſt to take care of them till they can be well 'provided for in ſervice or otherwiſe. Theſe

'were

'were the chief of my fixed and regular ex-
'pences of that ſort: what I gave away occa-
'ſionally can be no rule for the future, there-
'fore it would be to no purpoſe to mention it.
'I can ſcarce hope that the comfort your com-
'pliance with theſe requeſts would be to me,
'can avail with a man who ſets ſo ſmall a value
'on my happineſs, but I beg it for your own
'ſake. Your ſervant's being the leader of the
'attack that was made on this houſe, together
'with my ſudden flight, will raiſe ſuſpicions
'little to your honour, which would be openly
'declared with all the additions that anger and
'malice can ſuggeſt, if you appropriate my for-
'tune to any other uſe, than I have employed
'it in. If you let it go on in the ſame way, or
'divide what uſed to be ſpent in my family
'amongſt the different funds I have mentioned,
'you will bribe them to ſilence, which, as re-
'putation muſt be of ſome value to every one,
'cannot but be worth your conſideration. I
'have now ended all that I had to ſay, but am
'at the ſame loſs how to conclude as I was how
'to begin. The title of relation which you
'bear to me, brings your crime afreſh and in its
'worſt colours into my mind; any addreſs of
'affection and tenderneſs in which I once took
'ſo much pleaſure, would be but ill applied to
'my greateſt enemy, I muſt therefore end this
'abruptly.'

She then put up in a bundle what things were requiſite for her to carry, which indeed were no more than her money and a little change of linen. Having thus finiſhed all the neceſſary preparations for her journey, ſhe ſpent the reſt of her time in a ſort of ſecret farewell of all her domeſtics and dependants,

dependants, and wrote advice to ſuch as ſhe thought wanted it in any thing particularly; thinking that its being accompanied with the ſolemnity of a perhaps eternal farewell, might make the ſtronger impreſſion on their minds. All that ſhe had written ſhe put in a place where it would be ſoon found. She retired into her room pretty early; and that her flight might be the longer unknown, ſhe gave orders not to be diſturbed in the morning, ſaying ſhe would endeavour to ſleep as much the next day as ſhe could, in hopes of finding a refreſhment ſhe had not of a long time experienced.

As ſoon as her ſervants were gone to bed, ſhe ſtole gently out of the houſe, and directed her ſteps towards the next town, where ſhe had any chance of getting a vehicle to carry her on with greater ſpeed. This town was ten miles off, a walk which her ſtrength was not equal to. It being then the midſt of ſummer, and the weather very fine, the darkneſs of the night was no impediment to her journey; but ſhe was frequently forced to reſt in her way, and found herſelf three miles from the town, when day began to appear. She could get but little farther, when weary with fatigue and oppreſſed in ſpirit, life with ſtrength ſeeming to fail her, ſhe fainted away.

A young gentleman, who by an accident had been obliged to take up his lodging the night before at a very bad inn juſt by, not being able to ſleep, had been tempted by the fineneſs of the morning, to walk out and look at the country. Seeing a woman in that condition lying on the graſs, compaſſion prompted him to lend her all the aſſiſtance in his power; but when he obſerved

the

the beauty of her face, and gracefulneſs of her perſon, which were charming even in death, his deſire of recovering her was ſtill greatly encreaſed. By his care he brought her to herſelf in a little time. But her ſurprize to find herſelf in the arms of a ſtranger, was near having the ſame effect upon her, that her fatigue had had before. He, watchful of her countenance, to avoid giving her any alarm, no ſooner perceived her able to ſupport herſelf, than he retired to a little diſtance from her. As ſoon as ſhe had perfectly recovered her ſenſes, ſhe tried to purſue her journey, but found herſelf too much enfeebled to walk; this weakneſs heightening her diſtreſs ſhe was no longer able to preſerve her courage, but given up to deſpair ſat down and wept.

Bernardo (the name of him who had ſo kindly ſuccoured her) came towards her, expreſſed the moſt tender compaſſion for the grief ſhe ſeemed to be under, and begged if there was any way whereby he might relieve her, that ſhe would inſtruct him in it. He told her, that common humanity would make him rejoice in being able to do ſervice to any one, but the pleaſure would be much encreaſed when that one muſt be a perſon in whoſe relief no dangers could appear terrible; that nature when it made her, had given her a right to command, and mankind a ſufficient reward in the pleaſure of obeying; and that he ſhould think himſelf happy if by the ſervice of his whole life, he could in any degree relieve the misfortunes with which hers ſeemed to begin.

The warmth of his manner and expreſſions, revived the fears which his reſpect had removed. He perceived it; begged her to be under no apprehenſions,

prehenſions, aſſured her he would leave her that inſtant if his preſence made her uneaſy, but entreated her to permit him to carry her to ſome houſe, more fit for one ſo ill than the open air; that if ſhe would inform him where ſhe intended to go, he would joyfully convey her there, and would then leave her, if ſhe deſired it. Theſe aſſurances, the youth, innocence, and gentleneſs that appeared in his countenance pretty well diſſipated her fears; ſhe told him that her deſign had been to go to ——— but that ſhe found herſelf too weak to walk any farther. She gladly accepted of the offer he made her of his horſes, not willing to have any conveyance brought to her, leſt it might create obſervation, and lend ſome light to her uncle of the way ſhe had travelled; and ſhe was ſenſible of the neceſſity of leaving a publick road, now that the return of day would expoſe her to the chance of being known.

Bernardo returned to the inn, and brought a couple of horſes, one equipped for a woman and the other for himſelf, leaving his ſervant there, as he ſuſpected by ſome of her expreſſions, that ſhe was deſirous of being ſeen by as few as poſſible. As they rode to the town, he expreſſed ſome curioſity to know what had befallen her, perceiving by the bundle ſhe had with her, that ſhe had intended to undertake a journey, and yet ſhe did not appear like one uſed to travel in that manner; beſides, the early hour that he found her, her melancholy, and her fear of being ſeen, excited his curioſity. She deſired him to excuſe her anſwering his queſtions with any exactneſs; his extreme civility to her deſerved all the ſatisfaction ſhe could give him, which was thus much:

ſhe

ſhe was indeed what people called run away; but not from common cruelty, but from ſuch villanous treachery that ſhe could not remain in the place ſhe was, without the greateſt danger of her life and honour; that neceſſity, not choice, was the reaſon of her undertaking a journey unfit for her ſtrength and ſex; that her intention was to go about twenty miles further, with as much expedition as ſhe could, not thinking ſhe ſhould be ſafe from purſuit at a leſs diſtance. Who ſhe was, ſhe intended never to make known, as that would declare the perſon who had injured her, to whom ſhe was too nearly allied to wiſh to expoſe him. Beſides, ſhe was deſirous to baniſh even from her own thoughts, all her paſt life and circumſtances, as in all appearance the compariſon of it, with what was reſerved for her future fate, would be little to her ſatisfaction.

Though her account was ſo general, yet it ſtill added to the compaſſion and regard Bernardo had at firſt felt for her, and made him conceive it neceſſary to carry her to the moſt obſcure inn in the town. He begged her to call herſelf his ſiſter when they were there, as that would make her the leſs liable to be traced by any inquiries. When ſhe got to the place, though ſhe found herſelf very ill, ſhe deſired him to get her ſome conveyance to carry her farther, the rather as ſhe was apprehenſive that a little fever ſhe found upon her might increaſe, and ſhe be confined by it to a place much nearer her own houſe than was conſiſtent with her ſafety. At her deſire, Bernardo got her a poſt chaiſe, but unable to leave her when he ſaw her ſo ill, he accompanied her on horſeback to the town where ſhe intended

to

to take a little reſt. She tried all means to make him forbear his attendance on her, though his converſation greatly relieved the pains of her mind, by preſerving her from reflecting on the paſt, or anticipating the future. And his care was very neceſſary to her; for he could, by being more uſed to travelling, better provide for her convenience than ſhe could have done. Then his good ſenſe, his great attention to her, his modeſty, politeneſs and humanity, made him a companion that muſt have given great pleaſure to any one in an eaſy ſtate of mind, and much relieve thoſe in anxiety. All the virtues of his mind ſeemed impreſſed on his countenance, which in beauty could be excelled by nothing but her own. It is not ſtrange then that ſhe ſhould at laſt acquieſce in ſuch a companion, though at firſt ſhe feared him. He was already too ſtrongly attracted by her charms to be able to leave her, eſpecially when he found her grow ſo ill when ſhe came to the inn, that ſhe was obliged to go to bed immediately.

By the accounts that were brought him, he feared ſhe might be in a high fever, which was but too much confirmed by the phyſician he had ſent for, who declared her to be in great danger. It was this that ſhewed him how great an impreſſion their ſhort acquaintance had made on his heart: he was not able to keep from her, and the relation that the people of the houſe thought ſubſiſted between them, made it appear proper. Nor could ſhe find fault with ſuch kind attendance, in a place where ſhe could hope for little care; ſhe was too little uſed to diſſimulation to object to any thing that modeſty and real decorum did not forbid; though ſhe would not

have received a viſit from him in her bed, if ſhe had been well, yet ſhe could not reſiſt his earneſt entreaties, and the exceſſive diſtreſs and agony he appeared in, at the leaſt hint of a deſire of his leaving her. Her fever continuing very violent, he attended her both night and day. Unable to reſt, all places were equally uneaſy to him when abſent from her. When with her, he had the comfort of giving the moſt affectionate attendance, enjoying ſome converſation, and hopes of being a little relief to her by his care, and of gaining her eſteem, which he found next to her life, was what he moſt wiſhed for.

But notwithſtanding his care, the fear of her death increaſed daily, and with it his love. The courage and compoſure with which ſhe bore the danger ſhe was appriſed of, added to his eſteem and admiration. The fifteenth day, the phyſician declared he had no hopes of her recovery. She heard this declaration unmoved; and when ſhe ſaw Bernardo's grief, ſhe begged him not to let ſo ſhort an acquaintance bring any unhappineſs upon him; that nothing could give her pain in the ſentence that was paſſed upon her, but the fear of his ſuffering by having been ſo great a comfort to her; that he ought to conſider, that in loſing life, ſhe ſhould be ſecure of endleſs reſt; that a good conſcience made her have little reaſon to dread the entering into another ſtate, whereas if death was not to come to her relief, this life promiſed her many troubles. 'Conſider me, ſaid ſhe, though not uſed to luxury, yet bred up in indolence and eaſe, and till lately, free from all trouble and difficulties, and able to preſerve others from them likewiſe; entirely ignorant of all the cuſtoms of the world, unknown

to

to all in it, but ſuch as are capable of injuring me, or incapable of aſſiſting me, even with their councils; now expoſed to all the diſtreſſes, which even to thoſe who have been brought up in a way of life that might better enable one to encounter them, muſt appear very formidable, and add to all this the moſt cutting vexation upon my mind. Theſe conſiderations ſhould make you rejoice rather than grieve at my death; and let another reflection weigh with you, which is, that as great reaſon as I have to wiſh my life at an end, I cannot ſee this end give you pain, without fearing it; and yet were I to live, we muſt be divided.'

'Never my angel, never!' cried Bernardo, 'If heaven reſtores your health, imitate its mercy ſo far as never to divide me from you. I cannot live if you die, nor could I call that life which I ſhould lead abſent from you, altho' it was to be a little relieved by the hopes of ſeeing you again. I never felt true happineſs, till I ſaw you; nor can I ever feel miſery, but in parting with you; to ſhare your difficulties, your misfortunes, is the height of my ambition, as I might hope thereby to leſſen the burthen to you; and if I could not leſſen it, yet, if I did not encreaſe it, whilſt I ſuffered equally, I muſt feel a happineſs in the enjoyment of your preſence, and converſation, that an empire could not give me. Oh! my deareſt angel, I never knew love, I but imperfectly gueſſed at it by deſcription, till I knew you. Merciful heaven! let me not feel the heavieſt of misfortunes, by depriving me of her in whom all my happineſs is centered. Try my patience, my reſignation, in every other evil that can be inflicted on me;

if ſhe were ſpared, I could joyfully ſubmit; for every thing elſe is become indifferent to me.'

Here grief ſtopped his tongue, and Cornelia was a little relieved from the agitation this overflowing of his affection had put her in. Her heart was too well diſpoſed towards him, not to feel pleaſure at finding his ſo tender: her weakneſs and decay could not deprive her's of its ſoftneſs. She began to wiſh for life, and to fear death, as a thing that would for ever divide them.

As ſoon as ſhe had enough recovered her ſpirits to ſpeak, ſhe began thus: 'I find my ſtrength almoſt gone, but yet my heart lends me enough, Bernardo, to take this laſt adieu. Believe me full of gratitude for your care and tenderneſs, and of affection for your merits. No man before yourſelf, ever made the ſound of love pleaſing to me. My aim was always to put an inſtant end to their courtſhip, and never more by ſeeing them, venture to hear it repeated; but if life would ſtay with me, I could liſten to you with ſatisfaction: little able or inclined to diſſemble, I will add, that if by a long acquaintance, I had found you what you ſeem to me to be, I ſhould regret the loſs of a life I could paſs with you; but as that cannot be, I can the better bear the approach of death; and only beg you not to make it appear ſurrounded by terrors, by ſoftening me, and ſhewing how much it will grieve you. Conſider, I muſt ſubmit to its uncontroulable power, and that I ſhall be delivered from misfortunes, and you from being any more a witneſs to them. Reſign me to the will of providence, and let not my death affect your ſpirits: your youth, and diſſipation will ſoon enable

enable you to forget me: for my ſake, try it to the utmoſt of your power: your promiſe to endeavour it, would ſmooth my way to death.'

Her ſpirits were too much exhauſted to ſuffer her to continue her farewel. The ſtate of his mind made him incapable of returning her any anſwer: he had hold of one of her hands, and bathed it with his tears, which flowed too faſt to leave him the liberty of ſpeech: the emotion his ſilent grief gave her, added to the agitation of her ſpirits, and the weakneſs that ſucceeded the extraordinary effort ſhe had made to take her laſt adieu, got the better of her ſtrength, and ſhe grew quite inſenſible. After continuing ſo for ſome time, ſhe fell into a ſlumber, which flattered Bernardo with a return of hope. This encreaſed, by her finding herſelf conſiderably refreſhed, after a ſleep of four hours; and, in all appearance, her fever much abated. From that time ſhe continued mending, and was ſoon permitted to leave her bed, though ſhe remained very weak, and was not able to undertake a journey till near a month after. During that time Bernardo and ſhe enjoyed the pleaſure of each other's converſation without interruption; and having ſufficiently explained the ſituation of their hearts, when they imagined they were ſpeaking for the laſt time to each other, they could not pretend to make a ſecret of an affection too virtuous to require being concealed: they entertained each other with it, and took pleaſure in ſeeing they were thereby both made happy. Cornelia, conſcious of no thought that could not bear the light, and too ignorant of falſe decorum to believe it neceſſary to try to hide what was not founded upon, nor accompa-

nied with any bad principle, wiſhed not to conceal from Bernardo, the impreſſion which his merit and the obligations ſhe had received from him had made, as it ſeemed to give him the greateſt felicity.

While their time paſſed ſo agreeably, her recovery was patiently waited for; both by herſelf, and one no leſs anxious for her welfare. A leſs delicate and diſintereſted lover would perhaps have feared it, as ſhe gave him no hopes of any union, or correſpondence with him, after her leaving that place; but he could not wiſh the return of her health delayed, though for the prolonging of his happineſs. And yet the ſatisfaction he would have received from obſerving the whole progreſs of her recovery, was greatly allayed by knowing the conſequence. As her health improved, the ſpirits of both ſeemed to decay, and melancholy to take the place of ſickneſs. Though the dimunition of the money ſhe had brought from home with her, made her ſenſible of the neceſſity of her ſpeedy departure; yet ſhe could not without the utmoſt regret think of it, as it muſt deprive her of ſo much happineſs. Bernardo omitted no endeavour to prevail on her to marry him, but ſhe conſtantly refuſed to comply with his requeſt. 'Bernardo,' ſaid ſhe, 'ceaſe to aſk what I cannot grant; my ſelf-love is a very ſtrong advocate for what you propoſe; but powerful as it is, can never conquer my ſincere affection for you, nor blind me ſo far as to make me forget that by marrying of you, I muſt either ruin you, or expoſe myſelf to what is the next only misfortune that can bear any compariſon to that, the loſs of my reputation. If you were to own me as your wife,

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in all the poverty and obſcurity I now appear in; can we expect that a mother-in-law, whom you confeſs, you have no reaſon to think of a diſintereſted diſpoſition, would not make uſe of the power your father left her, of depriving you of your very ſubſiſtence whilſt ſhe lives; at leaſt, the poſſibility of it, is ſufficient to deter me from permitting you to run any ſuch hazard. If I was to declare who I am, my birth and fortune muſt remove her objections; but then it would expoſe you and myſelf to the hatred, and reſentment of a man too powerful for us to contend with. Were we to take the other courſe, and could we conceal our marriage ſo well as not to occaſion ſuſpicions in her, and thereby hazard your fortune; that concealment muſt deſtroy my reputation, for the loſs of which, innocence is not a ſufficient comfort; nor the greateſt happineſs, the company of a moſt tenderly beloved friend, a ſufficient recompence. I have too great a regard for you to bear ſuch aſperſions for your ſake; I could not be worthy of your attachment, if any one could with the appearance of reaſon, ſuſpect me of a want of virtue. It is neceſſary for all perſons to avoid being criminal; but women muſt be equally cautious of not appearing ſo: to give room for ſuſpicion, in us is a crime. I could never conſent to an union that muſt be attended by ſuch conſequences, in how flattering a light ſoever it may appear to me, when I conſider it as a means of conſtantly enjoying your converſation. I am ſenſible that in your abſence, I ſhall feel an unhappineſs which will baniſh from my thoughts, or make every other evil that the paſſed has inflicted, or the future can threaten, appear trifling. As no pleaſure

can compenſate the loſs of you, neither can any ſuffering compare with the pain I ſhall feel from it. But yet, I ſo ſincerely love you, that I am determined not only to leave you, but to do it without correſponding with you. Encompaſſed with all happy and pleaſing circumſtances, theſe will, with my abſence and ſilence, make you forget a ſudden paſſion. And though that of all others, is the moſt grievous thought to me; yet I value your eaſe ſo much above my own, that I will do all that is in my power to effect it; without being able to ſay I can, without ſevere pangs, wiſh my endeavours the ſucceſs that may probably attend them. Another reaſon for this reſolution, is, the little benefit that could ariſe from any farther correſpondence between us. We ſhould both of us thereby nouriſh a hopeleſs paſſion; and ſhould at laſt be forced to take the ſtep we now think cruel; when the paſſion was ſtill more deeply rooted, and had habit, as well as longer experienced reaſon and increaſed tenderneſs to make it more difficult to overcome. Nor would I venture myſelf always to liſten to the power of your perſuaſions: I cannot anſwer that I ſhould always feel ſo diſintereſted an affection, as to forbear marrying you. Who knows but a time might come, that ſelf-love might conquer that I bear to Bernardo?'

'Oh! my heavenly Cornelia,' anſwered Bernardo, 'call not that love to me, which inſpires you with ſuch cruelty. Can you wiſh to make th ſe you love miſerable? I could grow as inſatiable for riches as the greateſt miſer, by thinking of the joy I ſhould have in ſeeing them in your poſſeſſion: we are all miſers, we are all avaricious of what appears beſt to us; but the man

man who accumulates wealth, and whoſe ſoul is fixed upon it, is only called ſo: whilſt I who would take much more pains to obtain my Cornelia, cheriſh my treaſure with more love, guard it with greater care, and be as covetous of her affection, of her converſation, of her looks and ſmiles, as the greateſt miſer could be of his gold, ſhould eſcape the name! It is the object not the paſſion that is blamable. I am not aſhamed of wiſhing for riches, ſince it proceeds from a deſire to ſee you happy, and not from any love to them; nor with any other view than as a means of pleaſure to you: they can give me nothing beſides that will afford me a moment's ſatisfaction, like what I feel in converſing with, or looking on you. Can it appear ſtrange then, that whatever joy I might receive in communicating riches to you, I deſpiſe them when only to be enjoyed by myſelf; that I had rather partake of your poverty, try to ſmooth your difficulties, and relieve your cares, than to be maſter of the kingdom's wealth, ſeparated from you? Can you think ſo meanly of me, as to imagine I can prefer an eaſy ſubſiſtence to ſuch bliſsful indigence, or compare the poſſeſſion of a little gold with all the trifling enjoyments it can give, all that can pleaſe the vanity or the lazineſs of man, to being poſſeſſed of one ſo truly rich, one endowed by nature with a ſort of treaſure far beyond what fortune can beſtow, the beauties of the outward form, which are even eclipſed by the graces of the mind, and the virtues of the ſoul? In ſuch a treaſure would be my firſt, and my greateſt delight; herein would my vanity, as well as every worthy taſte be gratified: every minute more delightful and more beloved; time, or age, or any of the re-

verſes in this world could not diminiſh my happineſs. I could fear no foe but death. Think not, my angel, that we could ever ſuffer from poverty; the honeſt and induſtrious may always provide a ſubſiſtence for themſelves; with ſuch a pattern of unparalleled virtue before me, I could not fail of one of theſe qualifications: and who that had ſo noble a motive to induſtry as the care of my Cornelia, could fail of being induſtrious? The eaſe of inherited wealth, with all its enjoyments, are things I ſhould be inſenſible to without you; the invaluable bleſſing, which muſt give merit to the reſt, was firſt given to me; therefore call not that bringing ruin on me, which is the only ſource from whence I could derive happineſs. If you have the leaſt regard for me, can you think of letting me lead a life made miſerable by your abſence, and bear the ſtill more cruel thought of my living in ignorance of your ſafety, your hard fate, and of that on which all my happineſs depends, the ſituation of your heart? Can you thus chooſe to doom one to diſpair, for whom you feel any partiality? and wiſh him to feel all the pains and anxieties, which ſuch ignorance concerning you, muſt neceſſarily occaſion? How can I reconcile this to the kind aſſurances my bleſſed charmer has given me, of ſome regard for me? Is it poſſible not to doubt that ſhe has miſconſtrued a little compaſſion which my tender love awakened in her ſoul, when I ſee ſhe can thus contradict by her actions all that her words had given me room to hope? If you had any notion of the pangs of abſence, of the tender fears that muſt inceſſantly rack the breaſt of a true lover every moment that he is not aſſured the dear object is in health and ſafety, you could

not thus perſiſt in expoſing me to them; you cannot be inhuman, therefore you muſt be ignorant, and not imagine I can feel for you that love you have not for me."

Such a doubt made Cornelia again break ſilence. "Add not," ſaid ſhe, "by ſuch ſuſpicions of my truth, to what I already ſuffer from the conflicts within my breaſt; it is very difficult for me to preſerve that behaviour and reſolution which is but doing a proper juſtice to you; when you have no wiſh but to promote my happineſs, ſhould I deſtroy yours? No, Bernardo, my reſolution is unalterable; but put not ſo cruel a conſtruction upon it, as to believe it ariſes from indifference; heaven knows how ſenſible I am of all the pains you mention; but as time will relieve you from your ſhare of them ſooner than from thoſe I might bring upon you, I can bear to inflict them, and for your benefit will endure my own, tho' not likely to be ſoon overcome; as melancholy, which threatens to be my lot, carefully collects and preſerves every circumſtance that can add to miſery: but I can endure them better than the thought of bringing you into any diſtreſſes."

In ſuch diſcourſes as theſe paſſed the laſt week they ſpent together, but without having any effect on the mind of either. Cornelia could never be brought to change her purpoſe, nor Bernardo to agree to the execution of it. He would have been happy if his conſent had been neceſſary to the effecting of it: but at length the time came when they muſt part, and the coach was ready to carry her to Paris, where ſhe thought ſhe might beſt maintain and conceal herſelf, before Bernardo had ceaſed urging all the

moſt perſuaſive arguments love could invent, to prevail on her to deſiſt from her intent, and to permit him to accompany her. The cruel ſummons interrupted him in an unfiniſhed ſentence, and took from him all power to proceed. They were both ſtruck dumb and motionleſs at the hearing that moment was arrived which had not been made leſs terrible by expectation: what they ſuffered could not be alleviated by any preparation. As ſoon as Cornelia had enough recovered herſelf to be able to walk, ſhe ſummoned all her reſolution to enable her to leave him. He at firſt quite diſtracted with deſpair, falling on his knees, held her by the gown, whilſt he uttered the moſt paſſionate intreaties to prevail on her not to leave him, and behaved with ſuch diſtraction as added terror to her grief. With all that reaſon and tenderneſs could ſuggeſt, ſhe at length calmed him, and inclined him to ſubmit patiently to her, whoſe will he could on no other occaſion have contradicted. He embraced her with all the tenderneſs of love and deſpair; his tears flowed too faſt for him to ſay more than, "My ever dear Cornelia, forget not a wretch who has no happineſs but in your love; a purer, more ſincere affection you can meet with in no man; let that be looked upon as ſome merit in me, and whatever defects I have, be aſſured I am not capable of any towards you. If the trueſt love deſerves remembrance, preſerve me in yours, and let not abſence make you forget, that the loſs of your love, would reduce me to the greateſt degree of miſery, a human being can endure. My angel, at leaſt make me this promiſe, to apply to me if you ſhould be under any difficulties out of which I can extricate you: with-

without this I cannot live. Oh! merciful providence, preſerve her to be mine!" She was not more miſtreſs of herſelf; ſhe began often to ſpeak, but tears and ſighs interrupted her words, and ſhe could only ſay, "My conſtant prayer, my dear Bernardo, will be for your happineſs; neglect nothing that can contribute to it; think that the hope you will not, is my only comfort: to whom, in any diſtreſs can I apply, but to the maſter of my ſoul? May God grant us another meeting, when a ſeparation may not ſo ſoon follow it!"

The conſtant deſire to add ſtill to what they had ſaid, and the want of power to bid each other adieu, would have kept them together much longer, if the impatience of the paſſengers in the coach, had not ſent them repeated ſummons's; and at laſt ſhe was obliged to pay that obedience to importunity, which ſhe had denied to her inclination, and leave Bernardo in a ſituation incapable of reflexion, and deprived of hope and ſenſe.

The ſlowneſs of Cornelia's coming ſurprized the company that waited for her, leſs than the condition they ſaw her in when ſhe appeared. Compaſſion ſoon aroſe in the breaſt of every one. So much beauty, youth, innocence, and ſorrow, blended in one face they had never beheld. So many charms could permit no heart to remain inſenſible to what ſhe ſeemed to ſuffer; and her grief diſarmed the envy ſhe might have awakened in thoſe of her own ſex: they can pity beauty when diſtreſſed even tho' they before wiſhed it to be ſo. The good natured attention of her companions became very uſeful to Cornelia: the return of civility, which ſhe thought herſelf ob-

liged to make, a little diſſipated her thoughts, and by throwing her out of the deep melancholy, into which ſhe was plunged, enabled her to flatter herſelf with a little hope of ſeeing her preſent affliction removed. Curioſity, it is eaſy to believe, could be no longer reſtrained than till ſhe was able to ſatisfy it. She had then many queſtions put to her concerning the cauſe of her grief, and of her journey. In anſwer to the firſt, ſhe ſaid, in few words, ſhe had left all her friends; and to the ſecond, that ſhe went in hopes of gaining a ſubſiſtence in Paris, either in ſervice, or by work. The humanity of the men that were part of the company, made them watchful to ſtop all ſuch queſtions as ſoon as poſſible, perceiving how painful it was to her to anſwer them, and to divert her thoughts from, rather than direct them to the cauſe of her uneaſineſs.

By ſuch attentions her journey paſſed off more eaſily than ſhe could have expected; ſhe found her mind much relieved by the diſſipation; and for her greater eaſe, ſhe had an offer before the end of her journey from one of the paſſengers, (an old lady who had been very aſſiduous in her endeavours to amuſe her) of a lodging at her houſe, and a recommendation to ſuch perſons, as, whatever way of life ſhe fixed upon, ſhould prove ſufficient to procure her an eaſy maintenance. This was ſo thankfully and readily accepted of, that Cornelia deſired to be ſet down at her houſe, which ſhe had the ſatisfaction to find was in an obſcure part of the town; and ſhe thought ſhe could not be better placed to avoid being ſeen by any of her uncle's attendants, when he came to Paris.

At the widow's houſe they were received by her three daughters, two nieces, and two that were introduced to her as lodgers. They all appeared too gay to be much reliſhed by Cornelia in her preſent ſtate of melancholy and fatigue; ſo ſhe begged leave to retire to the room which was allotted for her, and that without any farther attendance or ceremony ſhe might go to bed. This was eaſily granted, as her appearance had given no great joy to any of this young party. She paſſed the next day in her room, being little able or inclined to go into company. The day after the widow thought it time to put an end to her ſolitude, and prevailed on her to make one of their party, which was the more readily obtained, as ſhe had pretty well recovered her fatigue, and had nothing to make her oppoſe it but the love of retirement, which was natural to the melancholy of her mind. The widow tried to raiſe her ſpirits by the fulleſt aſſurances of putting her into a way of making her fortune, if ſhe would but be ruled by her council. Her aſſurances went farther than Cornelia even wiſhed, ſhe only deſired to obtain a ſubſiſtence; but the widow who was no friend to procraſtination, began to put her promiſes in execution in the way ſhe had from the firſt intended.

Cornelia was very ignorant of the wickedneſs of the world, and never ſuſpected that any woman was ſo loſt to all virtue, as to live by betraying her own ſex. This made her ſurprize the leſs when ſhe ſaw her landlady introduce a gentleman into her chamber in the evening, and then leave her alone with him. She ſuppoſed it was ſome one, who from a reſemblance of names, imagined himſelf acquainted with her, and ex-

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pected to be delivered from his viſit, as ſoon as by a full ſight of her he had diſcovered his miſtake. The ſurprize that appeared in his countenance confirmed her in this opinion; but it aroſe only from the impreſſion the firſt ſight of her had made on him. The infamous woman, who had introduced him, had made great encomiums on her beauty, and exacted a very great price for the preference ſhe had given him, in preſenting him to her before any other; but yet this had raiſed no expectation in him beyond that of a common beauty, as the ſtrain of thoſe women is generally much the ſame about any one they intend to make profit by. The exceſſive beauty of her face, and the gracefulneſs of her perſon ſtruck him with ſurprize; and the innocence that ſhone in one, and the dignity that appeared in the other, infuſed an awe into him, which even the place he found her in could not overcome. The conſternation he ſeemed in, as it confirmed her in her firſt ſuppoſition, gave her the time to try to deliver him from it, and herſelf from an unwelcome intruder; ſhe therefore told him: "Sir, I perceive ſome miſtake has brought you here, you find you know me not, which I could not but be ſure of if your behaviour did not expreſs it, becauſe I am certain, I never ſaw you before; perhaps ſome of the people in the houſe may direct you better;" and immediately rung the bell. As he did not doubt but ſhe knew where ſhe was, he looked upon this as a reproach for a reſpect not uſual in thoſe places, or very impudent hypocriſy: this removed all the awe ſhe had inſpired him with, and he began to aſſure her, that the behaviour ſhe obſerved was only occaſioned by the ſurprize he was in, at the ſight

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of beauty ſo infinitely ſuperior to what he had ever beheld. The familiarity of his declaration amazed her; but ſhe was infinitely more ſo, upon his following it with gentle preſſures of her hand, and ſuch ſort of liberties, as ſhe could poſſibly conceive no excuſe for. She immediately flew from him to get out of the room, not chooſing to remain in ſuch company; but how was her amazement turned into terror, on finding the door lock'd! However, hoping this was accidental, ſhe rung the bell again with all poſſible violence. One of the ſervants came up to enquire what was the occaſion of it, but when ſhe required to have the door opened, went down without giving an anſwer.

Mr. De Rone (ſo we ſhall call the gentleman in the room with her) was all this time mixing promiſes with his careſſes, and trying to put an end to what deſtroyed the return he expected. Finding they had no effect, he ſuſpected her of cunning inſtead of modeſty, and ſufficiently captivated to comply with what he thought ſhe aimed at, he offered her a conſiderable ſettlement for life, and all the gratifications that the life of a kept miſtreſs can allow of; but he found all this ſerved only to heighten her fright and indignation; every emotion on her face appeared ſo natural, her modeſty and ſurprize ſo unaffected, that it made him begin to doubt whether what he had taken for acting a part was not the true ſentiments of virtue; but yet her not ſeeming to gueſs what ſort of a houſe ſhe was at, appeared ſo wide of probability, that he could not tell how to conſtrue it. After repeated trials to call people to her aſſiſtance, ſhe tried to prevail on him to leave her; ſhe conjured him not to inſult a woman,

woman, whoſe birth and conduct had exempted her from any ſuch behaviour from a man of any honour; ſhe accuſed him of having taken ſome methods to remove the people out of the houſe; told him that her life was in his power, but that her virtue and honour was in no perſon's, whilſt ſhe lived ſhe would maintain both; that as weak as her ſex might make her be thought, ſhe ſhould always be ſtrong enough to defend them; as for her life ſhe was indifferent about it, ſhe could part with it that inſtant without regret; but whilſt it was left her, ſhe ſhould always preſerve her honour; of many bleſſings it was all that was left, becauſe it was the only one that was in her power to preſerve. She had already ſuffered too much in hearing thoſe infamous propoſals he had made her; ſhe was ſorry there was a man breathing who could think any thing was an equivalent for loſt innocence; but that if he had any honour, ſhe begged him to leave her in the quiet poſſeſſion of the only thing ſhe was anxious about, her virtue; that all he could offer had no charms for her. She added to this ſuch pathetic intreaties, that Mr. De Rone, who was a man of great honour, and poſſeſſed of every virtue but chaſtity, was greatly moved. To clear up what appeared ſtrange to him, he inquired how long ſhe had been at that houſe, and how ſhe came there. She gave him an account of the whole. He aſked her if ſhe knew what ſort of a houſe ſhe was at. Her ignorance about that queſtion ſurprized him; the more he examined her, the more he found it real. "Madam," ſaid he, "where have you lived to be ſo ignorant of what I thought all the world knew; that there are houſes inhabited by nothing but common proſtitutes,

tutes, of which one woman is the governeſs, and has the chief profit; where men who are lazy in their pleaſures, or too ſcrupulous to debauch women whoſe paſſions or weakneſs may be greater than their virtue, if aſſailed with all the arts of man; and that this is one of thoſe houſes."

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the terror that poſſeſſed Cornelia at the danger of her ſituation, and the deteſtation of the characters he deſcribed; ſhe begged him, in an agony of mind that he ſincerely pitied, to tell her how to eſcape ſafely from that houſe. He aſſured her he would help her to effect it, and renewed the propoſals he at firſt made, as a means of removing her from it. This increaſed her uneaſineſs; ſhe cryed out, "What am I expoſed to! no one near me that has either virtue or honour, no one that will not inſult affliction and diſtreſs?" Mr. De Rone begged her to forgive him, aſſured her he would never more mention any ſuch thing to her, but obey her commands in ever thing. He only intreated her to give him a little account of the way ſhe had lived in, to remain ſo ignorant of the badneſs of a world, in which ſhe had had time to arrive at ſuch perfection. She complied with his requeſt. He was ſo charmed with her ſenſe and innocence, that he offered to carry her to a milliner to whom he was related: one who had been reduced by misfortunes, but was perfectly honeſt. Tho' the ill fortune Cornelia had had at this firſt houſe where ſhe was received, made her more fearful of any other ſhe might get into; yet when ſhe conſidered that he could not carry her to a place more convenient for any bad purpoſes, and therefore could have no reaſon to wiſh

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to remove her on that account, ſhe complied with his offer, and begged for its ſpeedy execution. He adviſed her to take what part of her things ſhe could conceal, with her; which was eaſily done, and handing her down ſtairs, he told the old woman he was going to carry her a ſhort tour, and ſhew her a little of the town. This blinded her watchfulneſs, and ſhe rejoiced at her ſucceſs, in having ſo ſoon overcome one who ſhe feared would have made a longer reſiſtance.

As ſoon as they got to Mr. De Rone's Coach, he ordered it to the miliner's, where Cornelia hired a room, and deſired to board; for ſhe liked the appearance of the family, who ſeemed to attend more to their buſineſs than to their perſons; and ſhe hoped to be here furniſhed with a means of ſubſiſting without breaking into the little ſum ſhe had by her. In this place ſhe lived for ſome time, not diſappointed of the quiet ſhe expected. She had nothing to diſturb her tranquility, but the abſence of Bernardo. He was always preſent to her thoughts, and the greateſt pleaſure ſhe enjoyed was contemplating his picture, which ſhe conſtantly carried about with her, as the only remains of the happy hours ſhe ſpent with him; except the more lively image of him, in her heart. The employment her poverty obliged her to, buſied her hands; but whilſt they were providing her with the means to preſerve her body, ſhe could gratify her mind with tracing back former ſcenes, recollecting every word he ſpoke, what looks, what actions adorned and dignified his words, what delicacy and purity of mind accompanied his love; how tender, how noble, and how amiable

amiable every thought he uttered; how charming a ſymetry between his mind and perſon, each alike beautiful and faultleſs. Theſe were her uſual reflections. Then would ariſe hopes of being once again made happy with the ſight of him. She pleaſed herſelf in fancied ſcenes, imagined herſelf united to him for ever, putting him in poſſeſſion of a fortune he deſerved, and making him happy by giving him a power to make others ſo. Herſelf his firſt care, bleſſed in his tenderneſs and friendſhip; in her own, obedience and the conſtant endeavour of pleaſing him; ſhewing her gratitude for the happineſs he communicated to her, and ſtriving to return him an equal portion. A gloomy thought would ſoon deſtroy all this gay deluſion, and ſhe would reflect how much more likely it was that a ſudden paſſion ſhould wear out of a heart ſo young; that another might fill the place ſhe had been imagining herſelf in. Or ſuppoſing him conſtant, what reaſon had ſhe to hope for ſucceſs like what ſhe had been flattering herſelf with? They might never meet again, or if they did, it might only be to part a ſecond time. Theſe fears drew tears from her eyes: ſhe uſed to weep over his picture, and addreſs it with all the paſſion of tender grief, as if it was her real Bernardo.

Such were her thoughts in the ſolitude ſhe lived in; for her life might be called ſo, though ſhe was in the houſe with a family. One of the few things that broke in upon her day, (which ſeldom conſiſted of leſs than nineteen hours of the four and twenty) was the children of her landlady; whom ſhe taught, according as their ages would permit, to write, read, work, and caſt

caſt accounts; obſerving that their mother by ill health, buſineſs, and a dejection of ſpirits, which is apt to attend reverſes of fortune, and to prevent their making the preſent as eaſy as they might; was rendered incapable of taking the neceſſary care for their inſtruction. Her landlady's company at meals, and in the evenings, frequent viſits from Mr. De Rone, whoſe merit made him always welcome, as his behaviour never deviated from the generoſity with which he had acted towards her; were other interruptions. He often found her in tears, which greatly affected him. He omitted no endeavours to prevail on her to permit him to make her a preſent of a ſum ſufficient to relieve her from any neceſſity of controuling her inclinations, by working for her ſubſiſtence; as he found by converſing with her, that ſhe had been uſed to a very different way of ſpending her time. He aſſured her that he had no view but doing a little juſtice to her merit; that though there was no one in the world for whom he had ſo ſincere a regard, yet he would promiſe never to appear in her ſight, if ſhe would oblige him in accepting of what might be an eaſe to her, but could not be felt by him, whoſe fortune was ſo much above all his wants. But he could not prevail on her to accept of this; her rule was never to receive an obligation, for which the giver could poſſibly, any moment of his life, wiſh for a return ſhe could not grant. She had refuſed Bernardo the ſame requeſt; it is not to be wondered at then, that ſhe did not grant it to Mr. De Rone, as highly as ſhe eſteemed him. He attempted all methods of making her preſents; but as ſhe could not doubt who was the giver, ſhe had it

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in her power to return them; in which ſhe never failed. She told him ſhe had already the higheſt obligation to him that could be conferred; the only additional favour ſhe could ever receive, was the continuance of his friendſhip.

After ſhe had been at this houſe a little above two months, ſhe was ſurpriſed and greatly affected by a melancholy ſcene at home. One morning as ſhe was indulging herſelf in looking on Bernardo's picture, and meditating on the beloved original, ſhe was awakened from the tender reveries of her imagination, by the cries and lamentations of all the children. She haſtened to enquire into the cauſe of it, and found they were crying over their mother, who was in fits. The ſervants were in too great conſternation to give her any diſtinct account; but when the poor woman was brought to herſelf, ſhe told her that a man had juſt informed her, that there was an action out againſt her for a debt of forty pounds; that though ſhe had never had ſpirits to examine into the ſituation of her affairs, yet ſhe knew ſhe had other debts, and could not doubt but to ſecure themſelves, they would all fall upon her at a time; that her ruin, and what was more, that of her dear children, was inevitable; that ſhe had no proſpect but a priſon for herſelf, and they had no chance of having either a ſubſiſtance, a nurſe, or conductor.

Cornelia could not have remained an unfeeling ſpectator of ſo moving a ſcene, even though ſhe had never conceived a particular regard for her, from the kindneſs with which ſhe had behaved to her, and the honeſty ſhe had obſerved in all her actions. She immediately begged her not

not to afflict herſelf ſo immoderately; told her, ſhe had fifty pounds, which ſhould go towards ſatisfying the moſt clamorous of her creditors; and that Mr. De Rone's generoſity would not let a relation be reduced to any diſtreſſes of that kind; that though he unfortunately went out of town the night before, yet he was not too far off to ſend her relief before ſhe could be driven to the utmoſt neceſſity. Madame Miteau (for that was the milliner's name) anſwered, that ſhe had already received ſuch obligations from Mr. De Rone, and had made ſo ill a uſe of them, that ſhe could not think of applying for farther favours; his generoſity had enabled her to undertake that way of life, and with ſuch advantages as promiſed her infallible ſucceſs; but at firſt ſhe was ſo ſtupified with her misfortunes, that ſhe could not attend to her affairs; and that when they had been for ſome time neglected, they became ſo intricate, and ſhe was ſo fearful leſt ſhe ſhould find them turn out amiſs, that ſhe had never had the courage to ſettle them; therefore muſt blame herſelf, and would take the deſerved puniſhment as her due, if the diſtreſs of her children did not depend on hers.

Cornelia at laſt prevailed ſo far as to pacify her, and deſired her to let her have the regulating of her affairs, and ſhe ſhould in a very little time inform her of the true ſtate of them.

The firſt thing ſhe did, was immediately to pay the money for which the action had been brought; that it might not be heard of, and thereby give the allarm to her other creditors, and occaſion their moleſting her. She then, by Madame de Miteau's books and bills ſettled the account of her trade, from its firſt beginning to

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that time; and by the ballance ſhewed her, that her affairs were not irretrievable, if carefully managed. If Mr. De Rone added a little to his former bounty, concerning which ſhe would write to him, ſhe would again begin the world upon an eaſy footing. But Madame Miteau was from the firſt knowledge of her misfortunes, thrown into ſo deep a melancholy and ſtupefaction, that nothing Cornelia could ſay made the leaſt impreſſion. Finding that, ſhe took what methods were moſt adviſeable for her recovery, and in the mean time took the management of her affairs. By the regularity Cornelia introduced into the whole, the new branches with which her ingenuity enabled her to extend their trade; and the induſtry, of which ſhe ſet an example, to all that were concerned in the ſhop, and took care to have followed by them, ſoon brought more buſineſs to it than ever. As ſome of the children were old enough to be of great uſe, and all of them of ſome; ſhe ordered it ſo, that each ſhould contribute with their ſervices as far as they were able. The eldeſt daughter ſhe taught book-keeping, and the management of their little family, and all the œconomy that could be uſeful to them. Others ſhe informed how to ſerve cuſtomers, and to keep the things they had to ſell in ſuch order as ſhould enable them to be expeditious in their parts. The youngeſt were put to plain work, till they were old enough to find out more profitable ſorts.

In about a month the good woman recovered her ſpirits, ſufficiently to ſee of what ſervice Cornelia had been to her. Which of itſelf, quite re-eſtabliſhed her. The joy of finding her affairs in ſo good a way, with the means which

had been taken for the care of a dejection, (neglected whilſt it was leſs violent) brought her to a happier ſtate of mind than ſhe had enjoyed from the time of her huſband's death; who without her knowledge had ſpent on other women, the fortune that ſhould have provided for her and her children.

About this time Mr. De Rone returned to Paris, too ſtrongly attracted by Cornelia's charms to bear a longer abſence. Madame Miteau immediately told him of the obligations ſhe was under to her. He was charmed with her goodneſs in undertaking to extricate that unhappy woman out of her difficulties, and the ſenſe and ſpirit with which ſhe performed it. He would gladly have looked on the ſum ſhe gave Madame Miteau as lent to himſelf, and advanced upon the knowledge of the joy with which he would pay it at his return. But Cornelia refuſed to be re-imburſed: it was great joy to her, that low as ſhe was reduced, ſhe had yet had it in her power to make ſome happy by parting with a trifle. She told him ſhe would be more obliged to him if he would, by adding to his former bounty toward his couſin, make her affairs eaſy. He enquired how much was requiſite; and from the account Cornelia gave him, he diſcharged all her creditors, and added to her ſtock as much as ſhe thought neceſſary.

The freſh proofs Mr. De Rone now had of Cornelia's merit, encreaſed his affection. He thought he had had ſufficient experience of her character, which was the only thing he waited for to offer her the command of himſelf and fortune. He admired that ſpirit of independency, which made her ſpend her time in work ſo little ſuited

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to her taſte. He obſerved, that ſhe would often encroach on the hours deſtined by the moſt vigilant and moſt ſtudious, to ſleep, to indulge herſelf in reading; rather than hazard a maintenance which ſhe was determined to receive only from her own hands. Inſtead of the common entertainments, to which vanity generally leads women who have not a chance of being near ſo much admired, her ſole recreation was in books, when ſhe could afford herſelf time for amuſement. He found it was no new one, but that it had once filled thoſe hours which were now in great meaſure employed in working; by the frequent converſations he had had with her, he had gratified his curioſity as well as entertained his mind, by diſcovering the extent of her learning, which notwithſtanding her great reſerve on theſe ſubjects, he perceived to be quite ſurprizing. As he had at firſt reſolved to be directed by what his farther obſervation ſhould ſhew him, he had never given way to any thing, that could make her ſuſpect him of more than great generoſity, friendſhip, and an admiration which was natural, even in a heart untouched with love. But he now thought a concealment as unneceſſary as it was difficult, ſince he was ſufficiently convinced of her merit, and was determined, that his happineſs ſhould be delayed by nothing but her will; and he had but little reaſon to find that averſe to him, ſince he was as well qualified by nature to gain a woman's heart, as by fortune to obtain her conſent.

Mr. De Rone was perfectly well made in his perſon, had a very fine air and great dignity; his face was regularly handſome, and the virtues of his mind ſhone in it; in his eyes tenderneſs

and vivacity were ſo happily mixed, that nothing could be more engaging or more animating at the ſame time. His manner was polite, delicate, and inſinuating. I have already ſaid enough of him to ſhew that his heart was perfectly amiable, his underſtanding was both great and agreeable; qualities that are not always found together, but, were perfectly united in him. He was of great quality, and of high eſtimation in life, and enjoyed a moſt ſplendid fortune. With theſe titles to ſucceſs, nothing but true love which conquers mightier things than a lover's diffidence, enabled him to aſk her leave to hope ſhe would not return cruelty for the ſincereſt paſſion. He told her, that till he got courage enough to beg her to accept of a fortune ſo much better ſuited to her merit than what ſhe had at preſent, he carefully concealed from her knowledge the love with which ſhe inſpired him, fearing any ſigns of it might create fears in her, which from ſome offences commited thro' ignorance, would not ſeem ill grounded; that the beginning of their acquaintance might give her a diſadvantageous opinion of him, and he muſt own with ſome reaſon; that he had always conceived a great diſlike to matrimony, from the little happineſs he had ſeen in that ſtate; that he had never before met with any woman whom he thought he could prefer to the whole ſex; that he was extremely difficult in his choice of the objects of his affections; the perſon of one, the underſtanding of another, the heart of a third, the behaviour of a fourth, would remove prejudices he had at firſt received in their favour; that, till he ſaw her, he had never met with a woman to whom he could preſerve the conſtancy which he looked upon

upon as an indiſpenſible duty, and the ſource of all happineſs in wedlock; and till his every deſire was thus centered in one, he had reſolved never to enter into that ſtate: that, the abhorrence he always had to the corrupting the principles and hurting the reputation of any woman, had, perhaps, been the occaſion of his appearing a greater libertine than he really was; tho' he could not deny but he had been too much ſo: but that he ſhould aſpire at a great perfection, if ſhe would give him hopes of curing him of his other faults as effectually, by letting him have her example conſtantly before him, as ſhe had already done of that one. He added all that a violent paſſion could inſpire, to prevail on her to give him hopes of her yielding to his perſuaſions, with which her countenance did not greatly flatter him.

Cornelia had ſo great a regard for him and thought herſelf under ſo many obligations to him, that nothing could have grieved her more than the diſcovery of ſo ſtrong a paſſion, which could only give him pain, and make her appear ungrateful. After the appearances of a concern that ſurprized him, ſhe told him, that by a declaration which would have made any other woman happy, he had given her the greateſt uneaſineſs: that he had conferred the greateſt of obligations on her, to which ſhe was under a neceſſity of making an ungrateful return: that he deſerved the heart of any woman, and could not fail of obtaining any that was not pre-engaged: ſhe grieved to tell him, that hers was already in the poſſeſſion of one whom ſhe believed might be allowed to deſerve her affection, as well as even himſelf; and better, ſhe thought, no man

could: that her love was all his, tho' poſſibly ſhe might never ſee him again: ſhe had nothing left to beſtow but her friendſhip and eſteem, both which he had in the higheſt degree, but were too ſmall a return for what ſhe owed him; ſhe was ſorry a man ſo capable of inſpiring love ſhould feel it for one who could not be ſenſible to it; but he muſt remove the uneaſineſs this might give him, by conſidering ſhe did not deſerve his affection; and that no woman was fit to be his wife, whoſe heart was not ſolely filled by his image.

Tho' this reception was the greateſt ſhock Mr. De Rone could receive, yet he found his admiration and eſteem increaſed by it. The conſtancy which could reſiſt ſuch temptations, and prefer a diſagreeable way of life encompaſſed with difficulties, to one which promiſed her every thing that was deſirable, muſt meet with admiration from a true lover; and he could not but reverence the purity and truth of her love, tho' he envied its object. He was too much affected to make her any anſwer. She imployed all her endeavours to ſooth his afflictions by a promiſe of inviolable friendſhip, and aſſurance of the higheſt eſteem. She tried to prove to him, that a delicate mind might be happy with that return. He thanked her for her ſentiments, and for her compaſſionate attention to him, and promiſed to uſe all the command he had over himſelf, to reduce his affection within ſuch bounds as ſhould enable him to be happy in her friendſhip, but that it muſt be done in abſence, he would not grieve her generous heart by letting her know how much he ſuffered, and therefore would leave

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Paris till he was able to ſee her without giving her pain.

This reſolution he ſoon executed, wiſhing to indulge a melancholy he could not divert, and to overcome a paſſion which muſt be attended with miſery.

Altho' Cornelia was concerned at the abſence of one, for whom ſhe had ſo much friendſhip, yet ſhe was pleaſed with the hopes that it would cure his paſſion, and that in loſing the lover, ſhe might again find the friend. She continued to give all the aſſiſtance in her power to Madame Miteau, and to teach her to keep her affairs in that order, in which they had been put. This friendly care obliged her to be a good deal in the way of ſuch as frequented the ſhop; ſhe particularly ſaw Madame Du Maine, an old lady who had long been a friend of Madame Miteau, and came much to her houſe. She was greatly pleaſed with Cornelia; and by the account her friend gave of her, and of the obligations ſhe had laid her under, what was at firſt a favourite prejudice ſoon turned into eſteem. She was very old, had quarrelled with two grand children, who uſed to live with her; the grand-ſon for extravagance, and her grand daughter for having married without her conſent. The management of her eſtate and family was a very heavy burden at her time of life. The account ſhe had of Cornelia's abilities, made her wiſh to prevail on her to come and live with her. She mentioned it to her, promiſing that ſhe would expect nothing more from her, than that ſhe ſhould manage her affairs with the œconomy ſhe ſo well underſtood; and that all the reſt of her time ſhould be entirely at her command: that ſhe would not even

deſire her to converſe with her, but when her own inclination led her to it: that ſhe ſhould be on an equal footing with herſelf in the houſe, and be welcome to all her company; and that what appeared as a privilege might not prove an inconvenience, ſhe offered her ſuch an allowance as would enable her to appear properly with great eaſe.

As far as Cornelia had been able to obſerve, or could learn from others, Madame Du Maine was a perſon of great underſtanding and merit. She was miſtreſs of a great many virtues, and had no fault but too great ſtrength of reſentment, and a ſlowneſs in forgiving. If he was offended, ſhe reſented it highly, and ſeldom forgot it: but then ſhe never was ſo without great provocation. Her offers could not meet with a refuſal from Cornelia, who had indeed ſubmitted with chearfulneſs to ſpend her time in working, becauſe it was neceſſary to her; but was glad to have a proſpect of indulging herſelf in reading, for which ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould have much time, as œconomy was a thing in which ſhe was too ſkilful to find it a full employment. She could not but enjoy a great many leiſure hours, as ſo few of hers were paſſed in ſleep. Madame Miteau ſeemed ſo well diſpoſed to follow the way ſhe had put her into, that ſhe left her with leſs regret, as ſhe thought her aſſiſtance now unneceſſary. The good woman and all her children were at a loſs, but yet the pleaſure of knowing her eſtabliſhed in a way of life ſo much more comfortable, overcame in ſuch of them as were old enough to reaſon, all ſelfiſh conſiderations.

Cornelia went as ſoon as it was agreed on to Madame Du Maine, who was delighted with the

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eaſe and aſſiſtance ſhe found from her, and not leſs with the charms of her converſation. She was a woman of learning, ſenſe, and taſte, ſufficient to reliſh Cornelia's underſtanding; and owned herſelf, however advanced in years, not too old to receive inſtruction from her. The benefit was not wholly of Madame Du Maine's ſide; Cornelia learned from her much of the cuſtoms of the world, of which ſhe had hitherto been ignorant; and received all the advantages of a long experience, without having had the pain of going thro' it. The greateſt part of her time paſſed in reading. She excuſed herſelf from appearing much in company, as it might endanger her being known; which ſhe owned ſhe had reaſon to be afraid of, tho' ſhe would not reveal the occaſion of her being obliged to conceal herſelf. She had not yet felt ſo perfect a friendſhip for any perſon, except Bernardo, as to make her think it a crime to conceal a thought; and the deſire of trying the truth of his love, and whether he could remain conſtant without any hopes of ever having any fortune with her; and the fear that the reſentment he might ſhew for the injuries ſhe had received, might lead him into dangers, had prevented her imparting it even to him.

If one poſſeſſed with the moſt tender paſſion could be happy in the abſence of the object of her love, Cornelia might have been ſo; her way of life was eaſy, and ſhe received the greateſt marks of eſteem and friendſhip from Madame Du Maine. Cornelia had the pleaſure of prevailing on her to employ part of her large fortune, according to the generoſity and charity ſhe uſed herſelf to practiſe; and with ſatisfaction ſaw, that

ſhe thereby cultivated the taſte Madame DuMaine had for all good actions, and that ſhe gave with her heart as well as with her hand. Cornelia had, from the firſt, taken every opportunity to inſinuate ſomething that might tend towards reconciling Madame Du Maine to her grand children, but ſhe was ſo averſe to it, that ſhe even fixed upon Cornelia for her heir; and told her, that her death ſhould ſhew how greatly ſhe loved her; not that ſhe would defer the proof of it till then; if Cornelia would give her an opportunity of gratifying her in any thing, ſhe ſhould find that ſhe thought not half her fortune too much to give to one, who could make her enjoy the reſt with eaſe and pleaſure. She offered to fulfil this promiſe immediately, or if ſhe choſe a partner in the fortune, to conſent to any match ſhe liked, for ſhe was ſure ſhe could not but chooſe wiſely. She only begged her to live with her, make her old age happy by her converſation and friendſhip, and govern that houſe and eſtate, which ſhe would ſettle on her at her death

Cornelia expreſſed her gratitude in all the terms ſincerity could dictate; but told her, that great as the temptation was, and ſhe owned it very great to one in her ſituation, yet ſhe could not accept of her offer; that ſhe ſhould ill requite her exceſſive goodneſs, if ſhe could conſent to her doing ſo wrong a thing as diſinheriting her grand children. She then added all the arguments ſhe could think of, to bring her to forgive them; but after repeated trials, ſhe could prevail no farther than to obtain her leave to bring her grand-daughter, Madame De Limon's child, to be bred up with her, if the mother appeared throughly to repent her diſobedience.

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She took an opportunity of repreſenting to Madame De Limon, of how much importance it was to her, to take all methods of obtaining Madame Du Maine's forgiveneſs. And letting her know what happy conſequences would attend her ſubmiſſions, and the little probability that ſhe would not ſoon after be received herſelf, ſhe diſpoſed her to do all that was requiſite on her part. Madame Du Maine, who loved her, and had never been able to conquer the grief the diſobedience of her and her brother had given her, kept the promiſe ſhe made to Cornelia, and took the child with pleaſure. She ſoon grew ſo fond of it, as greatly aſſiſted Cornelia's endeavours to perſwade her to ſee the father and mother. Madame Du Maine at laſt conſented, and was ſoon after prevailed upon to forgive her grand-ſon.

Cornelia ſoon found herſelf ill requited for the ſervices ſhe had done thoſe, to whom ſhe had reſtored the offered inheritance. Madame De Limon was poſſeſſed of a very narrow mind; ſhe had no virtues of her own; nor had ſhe underſtanding enough to ſee that in others, which ſhe did not feel in herſelf: ſhe had no acute ſenſe but for her own intereſt: the conſequences of a little mind and ſmall underſtanding, are jealouſy and ſuſpicion. From the firſt moment ſhe ſhould have been ſenſible of her obligations to Cornelia, inſtead of feeling gratitude, ſhe began to think it was dangerous to have a perſon near her grandmother, who had ſuch an influence over her. Madame De Limon, after ſhe came into the houſe, and ſaw how greatly Cornelia was eſteemed and reſpected, had her fears heightened by the viſible ſuperiority nature had given that young lady over others. Fear ſoon produced hatred.

Madame De Limon wiſhed what ſhe thought for her own intereſt; and having a weak as well as a bad mind, had not cunning enough to hide her wiſhes.

Cornelia ſoon perceived that her preſence was diſagreeable; but as in what ſhe had brought about, ſhe had only aimed at doing juſtice, and contributing to Madame Du Maine's happineſs, the ſatisfaction ſhe received from the uprightneſs of her own actions, did not depend on Madame De Limon's behaviour; altho' that ſatisfaction might have been greatly heightened by the merit of the perſon for whom ſhe had ſo generouſly laboured. However, ſhe could not be ſo indifferent about the behaviour of others, as not to find her ſituation very uneaſy. Her honeſt heart could ill bear to be ſuſpected of deſigns, of which ſhe had demonſtrated herſelf incapable to all the world. Madame De Limon, from her firſt growing uneaſy, ſoon began to behave in a manner equally unbecoming her own rank and the obligations ſhe had received. Her baſeneſs and ingratitude prompted her to make the worſt uſe of Cornelia's goodneſs, in not declaring the ill uſage ſhe met with. Madame De Limon took care to conceal her diſlike before her grand-mother, and let Cornelia feel the effects of her envy and malice, only in Madame Du Maine's abſence. There was no impertinence Cornelia did not endure, nor any ſort of lies Madame De Limon did not invent, that could poſſibly turn to Cornelia's diſadvantage: but her whole conduct was ſo full a juſtification, that they met with no credit.

Mr. De Limon, whoſe invention was more extenſive, and whoſe heart was rather worſe than

than his wife's, prompted her to be more injurious than ſhe would otherwiſe have been. He had married Madamoiſelle Du Maine with a view of intereſt. She had no charms either of mind or perſon; nor Mr. De Limon eyes to ſee them, had ſhe been better endowed. His ruling paſſion was the love of money; his thoughts and purſuits had never any other aim; his underſtanding was governed by it, and his heart filled with it. His avarice naturally had little virtue to oppoſe it, but it had a taſk not leſs troubleſome; the concealing of many vices, in order to provide for its own gratification. It had a bad temper to turn into the appearance of ſweetneſs; moroſeneſs into complacency; cruelty into compaſſion; and, in ſhort, its own ſelf into generoſity. The better to deceive, he appeared ſincere; and to gain the end he aimed at, knew how to counterfeit indifference for it. He had an underſtanding that qualified him for pleaſing, and by his great attention, ſeldom failed of ſucceſs. He inſinuated himſelf into people's affections, by his approbation and encouragement of their worſt paſſions. He well knew how much men were governed by them, and the pleaſure they took in being flattered, even in things for which, upon reflection, they could not help reproaching themſelves.

But as his only aim was to do himſelf ſervice, he little valued the pernicious conſequences of his flattery. By ſuch arts he firſt obtained admiſſion into Madame Du Maine's houſe, and then into her grand-daughter's heart; without any one having the leaſt ſuſpicion of his intention. For he uſed as much artifice to convince every one elſe, that he was indifferent to Mademoiſelle Du Maine,

Maine, as to perſwade her ſhe had inſpired him with the moſt violent paſſion.

It is very eaſy to imagine, that the favour Cornelia was in with Madame Du Maine, would give umbrage to one of ſuch a character, whoſe ſelfiſhneſs made him ſuſpicious and watchful. He endeavoured by all the means he could invent to remove her from his grandmother. But as it was not in the power of envy to ſee a fault in Cornelia, nor of malice and falſhood to make her be believed guilty of one, the only way by which he could hope to ſucceed, was to give her reaſon to chooſe a change, by making her very uneaſy in her preſent ſituation. And indeed he took ſuch ſure methods, that ſhe determined to give up the way of life that till then had made her ſo happy, rather than endure the ſuſpicions and fears ſhe ſaw they were filled with, and the behaviour that was the conſequence of them.

The great difficulty ſhe was under, was, the manner in which ſhe ſhould declare her intention to Madame Du Maine; who loved her too well to part eaſily with her. Cornelia feared the quickneſs of the lady's diſcernment might make her gueſs at the occaſion of ſuch a reſolution, which muſt otherwiſe appear ſo ſtrange to one who had ſo kindly done all that lay in her power to make her happy. The fear ſhe had leſt her generous friend ſhould believe her inſenſible or ungrateful to ſo much goodneſs, added greatly to the pain ſhe felt at the thoughts of parting with the perſon ſhe was moſt obliged to, and for whom ſhe had the greateſt eſteem and affection. But all theſe difficulties could not prevail on her to remain where ſhe ſaw ſuch injurious ſuſpicions entertained concerning her,

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by perſons who had the greateſt reaſons to eſteem her. In conſequence of her reſolution, ſhe one day ſummoned all her courage and command of herſelf, to inform Madame Du Maine of her intention.

She began, by begging her to let nothing ſhe was going to ſay raiſe the leaſt notion in her, that ſhe was not deeply affected with the higheſt gratitude, for the unparallelled favours ſhe had received from her; or doubt her being touched with a moſt diſintereſted affection for her merits; for therein ſhe would, for the firſt time in her life, do an injuſtice. 'With you Madam,' ſaid ſhe, 'I found a refuge from all my misfortunes; and enjoyed eaſe and plenty, with the additional happineſs of the friendſhip you honoured me with. I am ſenſible that by leaving you, I muſt be expoſed again to many of the difficulties from which you preſerved me; but yet I muſt beg your permiſſion to forſake all I enjoy from your goodneſs, and what will be my greateſt loſs, your converſation. I would beg to keep my place in your eſteem, and to have the honour of ſeeing you, when your leiſure and opportunity will allow you to admit me. I hope for your forgiveneſs, as I am ſure if you ſaw all that paſſes in my heart, you would know me to be an object of pity, not of anger. If my ſervices could be of uſe to you, gratitude ought, and affection would fix me here. But in Madame De Limon you have an aſſiſtant in all buſineſs, and one who will with pleaſure relieve you from all the diſagreeable attentions, in the government of your eſtate and family. If at any time further aſſiſtance is wanting, the greateſt ſatisfaction I can receive will be to ſerve you;

you; and my firſt wiſh will always be for the happineſs of a benefactreſs, to whom I owe every good I have enjoyed, and whoſe heart allotted me all that generoſity can give; but made me the moſt valuable preſent, in giving me ſo great a ſhare of its own ineſtimable affections.'

Madame Du Maine, had been too quick-ſighted to be deceived, by the ſpecious behaviour of her grand children in her preſence. She had found out how very ill they uſed Cornelia on all occaſions; but knew not how to prevent it, without taking ſuch meaſures as would oblige her to undo all ſhe had done in their favour. Senſible of the unworthy treatment Cornelia had received, Madame Du Maine admired, inſtead of blaming, ſo honeſt and juſt a pride; but was not willing to loſe the moſt worthy object of her affection, for the ſake of thoſe ſo much inferior in merit; and therefore ſhe determined to do her utmoſt to avoid what ſhe could not but look on as a great misfortune. 'My dear Cornelia,' ſaid ſhe, 'though you have not told me the reaſon of your wiſhing to leave me, yet I believe I am no ſtranger to it. I have been informed of the inexcuſable behaviour of the perſons who are the moſt obliged to you of any in the world; and you may be ſure am not inſenſible to their ingratitude; the effects of which I doubt not I ſhould myſelf experience, did not ſelfiſhneſs keep the other vice from appearing. But they have miſtaken their aim, and ſhall find that the means they take to obtain what they aim at, ſhall turn to their diſappointment. Had Monſieur and Madame De Limon ſhewn that friendſhip and gratitude which your incomparable generoſity deſerved from them, their fortune would have

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received no greater diminution than of a few thouſand pounds, which I ſhould have thought a ſmall reward for your friendſhip, and a ſmall return for what you ſo nobly refuſed. But ſince they want to deprive me of you, out of a truly deſpicable fear of my leaving you too great a ſhare of a fortune they knew they would never have partaken of, but for the manner in which you uſed the eſteem you had given me for you; they ſhall find, that merit has ſtronger ties with me than blood. Yet I will uſe them better than they would me. Money is their greateſt happineſs; your company is mine. They would deprive me of all, but I them only of part. My fortune I will divide between you; but my houſe you only ſhall ſhare whilſt I live: if they will make it diſagreeable to you, they ſhall remain no longer in it.

Cornelia, though charmed with her friendſhip, yet had too much generoſity to acquieſce in it; and begged her not to miſconſtrue in her grand children a jealouſy, which, though carried too far, might be looked upon as a virtue, ſince it muſt proceed from their love. That they had experienced too much of her, to fear ſhe would deprive them of the inheritance they had a right to expect; and that their jealouſy could only be of a competitor in their grandmother's heart. She begged therefore, that Madame Du Maine, would not give her the mortification of having been the cauſe of any diſagreement between her and Madame de Limon, but permit her to leave them in amity. She inſiſted ſo much on this, and begged it ſo earneſtly, that Madame Du Maine agreed to try all the means ſhe could of altering their behaviour; by letting them know

know ſhe was ſenſible of what was paſt, and how much ſhe reſented it. This, though it encreaſed their hatred and fears, made them conceal both as much as they could.

Soon after, they all went to make a viſit to a relation of theirs, who had often been at Madame Du Maine's, and had ſhewn ſo great an inclination towards Cornelia, as made her deſirous not to be of the party. Her heart was ſo entirely engaged to Bernardo, that the addreſſes of all other men were extremely diſagreeable to her. But Madame Du Maine deſiring her to go, and Monſieur and Madame De Limon preſſing her to accompany them, ſhe could not in civility refuſe it.

The gentleman they went to was a widower; his name, Monſieur De Rhée: his caſtle had been a very fine one. Time and the civil wars had robbed it of a great deal of its beauty, though not of its magnificence. At this place they ſpent near a month very agreeably. Monſieur De Rhée took all poſſible care to furniſh them with variety of amuſements. Cornelia was the only perſon diſcontented: his continual ſollicitations being a conſtant trouble to her. He became a moſt ardent lover; and greatly piqued at the indifference he found ſhe had for him; inſtead of being grieved on finding no return to his love, he was enraged at not meeting with what his vanity made him think his due.

Monſieur De Rhée was of a hot fiery temper, proud of the ancient ſplendor of his family, and vain of his own endowments; he had ſome ſenſe, and a great deal of wit; but one was as much exceeded by the ſtrength of his paſſions, as the other was by his conceit of it. His ſenſe became

came uſeleſs towards regulating his conduct, and his wit was deprived of the power of pleaſing. Whatever he undertook, he purſued with violence; till ſome new thing, by its novelty, ſtruck his fancy, and changed the chace. The eagerneſs was always the ſame, though the object varied. No difficulties, no hazards ſtopped him. The inſtant any thing appeared deſirable, it became neceſſary, till ſome other neceſſity of the ſame kind made him forget the former. Spurred on by paſſion, and guided by prejudice, his actions and opinions were equally variable, and inconſiſtent with reaſon. With all this, when he enjoyed a calm and quiet ſtate of mind (which indeed was ſeldom laſting) he was generous and good humoured. His face was handſome, and his perſon well made. Theſe, with his vivacity, made him thought agreeable by many accuſtomed to be well received by the fair ſex. He did not know how to bear Cornelia's coldneſs. Monſieur and Madame De Limon omitted nothing to pique his vanity, and encreaſe his love and his reſentment. He, at laſt, became ſo tormenting to Cornelia, that Madame Du Maine determined to return home, to free her from ſuch diſagreeable perſecution.

Accordingly the day was fixed, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition, politeneſs and love could raiſe in Monſieur De Rhée. When Madame Du Maine awaked, in the morning appointed for their departure, ſhe ſent her ſervant to enquire after the health of Cornelia, who had gone to bed ſomewhat indiſpoſed the night before. But how great was her ſurprize, when her ſervant brought her back word, that ſhe could not find her in the houſe, or garden, and that her box

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and clothes were all miſſing. This alarming account raiſed various apprehenſions in Madame Du Main's mind, all equally painful to her kind and friendly heart. She roſe with all poſſible haſte, and went to make what enquiry ſhe could; but learned nothing to fix her thoughts. All ſhe heard, was, that the ſervants, upon their firſt coming down in the morning, found one of the doors open which uſed to be bolted. Monſieur De Rhée entered into all Madame Du Maine's intentions of inquiry, and ſent ſervants of his own, with hers, in ſearch of Cornelia. He was ſo much moved with her loſs, he would have gone himſelf, had they not ſtrongly perſuaded him againſt it.

The conſtructions that were put on this accident, were various. Moſt people ſeemed to imagine ſhe had run away, and attributed it to all the reaſons that ſuch flights ever proceed from. Monſieur and Madame De Limon embraced the moſt injurious opinions; but Madame Du Maine had ſo true an eſteem for her, that ſuch inſinuations moved her anger and her ſcorn, inſtead of her belief. She could not for a moment ſuſpect her of taking ſuch a ſtep. She had experienced the ſtrongeſt proofs of her attachment, confidence, friendſhip, and prudence; and could not therefore harbour a thought of her d ing any thing inconſiſtent with either. She knew the diſpoſitions of her grand children, and of Monſieur De Rhée towards her. His love, and his reſentment, and violence of temper, filled her mind with every fear. In this perplexed and anxious ſtate of mind, ſhe continued three days, that they were making ſtrict enquiries after Cornelia. When nothing farther could be done, ſhe reſolved

ſolved to go home; thinking it the moſt likely place to hear of any diſtreſſes her friend might be in. Madame Du Maine returned with a very heavy heart: her thoughts were filled with fears of the moſt dreadful evils, that might happen to the perſon who had been the comfort and relief of her age, whom ſhe loved and admired, and would have given her life to have ſecured in peace and ſafety.

It is time now to return to Cornelia; whoſe ſituation was not leſs terrible, than her patroneſs's affrighted imagination had repreſented it to be. Having gone to bed indiſpoſed, and not being able to ſleep, ſhe got up, and putting on her morning dreſs, ſat and read, till ſhe thought her mind more compoſed and likely to take a little reſt: that ſhe might indulge it the longer next day, ſhe lay down in her cloaths. In the midſt of the night ſhe was awakened by the unlocking of a cloſet door, which ſhe had never before ſeen opened; and had been told it was filled with Monſieur De Rhée's papers. In an inſtant three men appeared at her bed-ſide, and threatened her with death, if ſhe uttered the leaſt cry, or made any difficulty of going along with them. But as ſhe could not foreſee any conſequence of her ſilence, more eligible than what they menaced her with; ſhe began to try, by crying out, and ringing her bell, to bring ſome one to her aſſiſtance. But ſhe no ſooner attempted it, than they ſtopped her mouth with a handkerchief, and bound her hands, ſo that ſhe could no longer make any reſiſtance. The terror of finding herſelf defenceleſs, in the power of people ſhe knew could only mean her ill, ſo far overcame her ſtrength of mind, that ſhe loſt all

all ſenſe. In that condition they carried her off, and every thing belonging to her likewiſe: omitting nothing that might give the leaſt appearance of her having taken a voluntary flight. One of the men put her before him on a horſe, and with the reſt, rode with all the ſpeed that the incumbrance of his lifeleſs burthen would permit. She did not recover from her firſt ſwoon till after they had gone ſome miles; and then only opened her eyes to ſhut them again, in the ſame temporary death.

Thus they travelled till near day-light, when they put her into a chariot which met them for that purpoſe. One of the men got into it with her, and by keeping the canvaſſes up, prevented paſſengers from being moved by ſo melancholy a ſpectacle. Day-light had in part abated her terrors, and ſhe was reſtored to her ſenſes, but only to ſuffer more pain, by all the dreadful thoughts that crouded on her. Her laſt fit was no ſooner over, than ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, and could not reſtrain them long enough to enquire to what fate ſhe was deſtined. She entertained ſome hope of making her eſcape, by the aſſiſtance of ſuch whoſe pity ſhe might move at the firſt inn, where they ſhould take refreſhment. Great was the addition to her miſery, when ſhe found all poſſible precautions had been taken to make that needleſs. About the middle of the day they ſtopped in a wood, and preſented her with proviſion they had brought with them, ready prepared; begged ſhe would ſuſpend her grief and partake of their repaſt. She refuſed their offer; but aſked for ſuch things as could not be had without carrying her to ſome place where they might have been prepared. They

told her, they were ordered not to ſtop at any houſe till they came to their journey's end. She begged to know what was to become of her. They tried to moderate her grief, by promiſing her all that Monſieur De Rhée's love could invent for her entertainment, or adminiſter to her happineſs. It was no relief to her to know ſhe was in his power. She had before entertained ſome ſuſpicion that Monſieur and Madame De Limon had taken theſe violent means to remove her from Madame Du Maine; and however terrible this reflection was, it was much leſs ſo than the thought of being expoſed to the furious paſſion of Monſieur De Rhée. She found herſelf deprived of all hopes of eſcaping, when ſhe obſerved that the coming of night did not ſtop their travelling.

Before day-break they ſtopped, and told her ſhe was at her journey's end, and with all precautions againſt her making any noiſe, carried her into a houſe, which they told her was Monſieur de Rhée's. She was put into one of thoſe rooms, not uncommonly found in old caſtles, where the owner may lie concealed, in caſe inteſtine feuds and commotions, or other occaſions, made it neceſſary. She ſoon found herſelf out of the hearing of any one; the little light ſhe had, came in by the top of the room, which had ſo much the air of a priſon, as would have raiſed terrors in a mind much leſs occupied by its own anticipating imagination. The only ſervant that came near her, was an elderly woman, of a very unpleaſing countenance, in which were painted ill nature and avarice. Her behaviour, and the ſentiments ſhe diſcovered, did not contradict thoſe outward ſigns.

Cornelia was, during four days, agreeably ſurpriſed at not ſeeing Monſieur De Rhée. But when ſhe had recovered her ſpirits enough to aſk for a book, the old woman told her, ſhe would not long be without company; for that her maſter would entertain her much better by his converſation, than books could do. Unaccuſtomed to take much ſleep, and now leſs enclined to it than ever, with neither objects nor books to amuſe the melancholy of her mind, ſhe found the hours, that uſed to appear ſo much too ſhort for her, grown terribly tedious. In this wearineſs of mind ſhe had recourſe to her pen and ink, which, with all neceſſary materials for writing, were brought among her things. Her employment was to write her thoughts on ſeveral ſubjects as they occurred to her. Theſe were but melancholy, though ſhe had choſen them out of the leaſt ſhocking that poſſeſſed her mind, in hopes of drawing ſome comfort from them. By writing theſe eſſays ſhe was a little amuſed; and by fixing her hope on the goodneſs of God, and her comfort in virtue, which gives more happineſs to the diſtreſſed than the vicious feel in their proſperity, ſhe by degrees found more compoſure of mind. But it was ſoon deſtroyed by the appearance of Monſieur De Rhée.

His abſence has already been accounted for by Madame Du Maine's ſtay at his houſe, after the loſs of Cornelia. He was no ſooner at liberty, than he repaired with all ſpeed to the caſtle where ſhe was confined. His entrance into the room, at once put an end to all the benefit ſhe had reaped from her own reflections. Indignation and terror were ſpread over her countenance. Before ſhe had the power to ſpeak,

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he fell on his knees, begged her to forgive what his love had cauſed, expatiated on the impoſſibility of living abſent from her; or preſent, if expoſed to her ſcorn; and made uſe of all the arguments that could be drawn from the exceſs of love, to entitle him to a pardon. But Cornelia, who could not conſider a paſſion as love, when its aim was not the happineſs of the object it was placed on, told Monſieur De Rhée, he had better riſe, than remain on his knees till ſhe forgave him; that ſhe was not ſo eaſily impoſed on by an humble poſture, as to forgive the violence he had uſed; which was as little conſiſtent with humility, as the making her miſerable was with love; that ſhe conſidered his behaviour as the effect of a haughty and impetuous temper, and that ſhe could not wiſh for any proof of his love, becauſe ſhe could not return it. She only deſired that he would ſhew himſelf not totally void of honour and humanity; and if he wiſhed for her eſteem, which was all ſhe had to give, he muſt ſhew himſelf worthy of it; and not expect gratitude where reſentment only was due.

Of all the various characters love could make Monſieur De Rhée aſſume, that of a ſuppliant was the laſt: he well knew the impetuoſity of a lover, but little of his humility. He had been encouraged by his own wiſhes, and the opinion of Monſieur and Madame De Limon, to hope that the confinement Cornelia was in, would abate her rigour. He believed prudence would make her appear to approve his love; and he did not doubt but if ſhe would once liſten to him, inclination would take the place of pru-

dence. He was not leſs ſurpriſed than exaſperated, when he found the civility with which ſhe always treated him, turned into anger, and indifference into diſdain. This diſappointment, however, made him reſolve to lay aſide any farther entreaties at that time; and try whether his aſſiduity and charms might not conquer the heart that had hitherto refuſed to yield.

There was no kind of behaviour ſhe did not experience from him. He muſt have pleaſed a woman who delighted in variety; for he was all lovers in one. Sometimes inſolent in his reſentments; at others, preſuming in his love; at times tender and paſſionate, melancholy and diſpairing; at others, lively, entertaining and good humoured. He ſpent the greateſt part of the day with her, furniſhed her with books to amuſe her in his abſence; and when the darkneſs of the evening gave her the liberty of walking, without danger of being ſeen, he would inſiſt on her going with him; fearing that want of air and exerciſe, joined with vexation, might impair her health; which had in ſome meaſure ſuffered already, though ſhe was ſupported by great natural ſtrength of conſtitution. As thro' all his variety of paſſions he had ſhewn none that could alarm her virtue, ſhe grew eaſier, whilſt he was trying all ways to gain her heart. She found him a greater ſlave to his paſſions than ſhe was to him, and was ſure they were the worſe tyrants. Pity abated her reſentment; and ſhe hoped by coldneſs to gain a liberty which out of anger he might deprive her of, if ſhe ſhewed too plainly the ſenſe ſhe had of his behavour.

Their

Their converſation thus grew more eaſy, and in the length of time they paſſed together, it turned on a great variety of ſubjects: his love, inſtead of being leſſened, was increaſed by it. He ſaw more of her perfections, ſaw more reaſon than ever to be charmed with her diſpoſition, and aſtoniſhed at her underſtanding and learning. He frequently preſſed her to marry him; ſhe as conſtantly refuſed; telling him, that ſhe would never marry a man whom ſhe could not love: how could ſhe enter into a ſtate, wherein ſhe promiſed to love, without being ſure ſhe could fulfil it? that, in her opinion, all promiſes were binding, and this one more particularly ſo, ſince her own, her huſband's, and, in great meaſure, the happineſs of a whole family depended upon it: that ſhe had no reaſon to have a bad opinion of her own heart; hitherto ſhe had found her duty and inclination very conſiſtent, but that would not encourage her to venture upon an union that would ſet them at variance; tho' ſhe hoped ſhe ſhould always do right, yet ſhe would not bring upon herſelf any temptation to do wrong; that, for her part, ſhe did not think ſhe could perform all the duties of a wife as ſhe ought, unleſs ſhe loved her husband; and therefore ſhe was determined, out of regard to her own eaſe of mind and his happineſs, never to undertake ſo difficult a taſk.

His paſſion was too ſtrong to ſuffer him to approve the reaſons of this refuſal, any more than the arguments ſhe uſed to ſhew him how little ſatisfaction he could have in being united to a woman whoſe affections he did not poſſeſs. His paſſion had more of violence than delicacy in it; he thought of no refinements, nor to be pleaſed

wanted to know that the pleaſure was mutual. She had, in vain, uſed all arguments to induce him to grant her her liberty, and all means to abate his love, but equally without ſucceſs. She began to deſpair of getting from him, and to fear every thing from being with him, convinced he could not perſiſt in keeping her a priſoner, without being determined to make all poſſible uſe of it for his own gratification. He, far from removing her fears, often let his anger break forth in obſcure threats, and adviſed her to be induced to better uſage, by conſidering how much ſhe was in his power. The anxiety, which for a time had been pretty well removed, returned again with double force; all her thoughts were turned towards finding out ſome way to eſcape, not being quite diſcouraged with the appearance of impoſſibility.

She tried the diſpoſition of the only ſervant that came near her, but found him not likely to be moved by pity, or virtue, from doing what he thought was for his intereſt. He could not believe that aſſiſting her would ever be more advantageous to him than his compliance with his maſter. He told Monſieur de Rhée the attempts ſhe had made to prevail on him to betray his truſt. It greatly exaſperated this imperious lover: he reproached her with ingratitude, for the conſideration with which he had treated her. She told him, ſhe could not acknowledge as a favour, a man's not uſing her as ill as poſſible; that he had impriſoned her, and then expected that a few civilities, mixed with a brutal behaviour, ſhould make her forget the irreparable injury he did her, in taking away her liberty, her eaſe of mind, and removing her from the beſt

beſt of friends. To liberty ſhe had a natural right; ſhe might be deprived of the enjoyment of it, but never of her title to it, which ſhe ſhould aſſert whenever ſhe ſhould have it in her power; and therefore, if he had either generoſity, love, or the leaſt deſire for her eſteem, he would rather let her enjoy her freedom by his gift, than by her own procurement; and that if ſhe received it from him, he would then cancel all he had made her ſuffer; but if ſhe obtained it without him, ſhe ſhould leave him with a heart full of reſentment, ſcorn, and hatred. He laughed at her ſuppoſition, that ſhe could find any other way of getting from him than what he ſhould furniſh her with. The room where ſhe lodged was too well ſecured on the outſide, to leave any poſſibility of her eſcape. The more ſhe thought of it, the greater her deſpair grew; but at length one evening came that gave her a glimmering of hope.

Monſieur de Rhée had brought her out to walk by the light of a very bright moon; when they were in a little incloſed ſpot of ground, from whence he ſaw ſhe could not get out, he left her to go and examine whether all the windows were ſhut that looked into a part of the garden where he had a mind to carry her. He was ſcarce gone before ſhe perceived a young woman not far from her, walking towards the h uſe. Cornelia ran to her, fell on her knees, told her ſhe was confined in that houſe, and beg'd her aſſiſtance for her delivery out of it. The young woman was ſo aſtoniſhed with the adventure, and ſeeing ſo beautiful a creature at her feet, that ſhe could not anſwer her. Cornelia took the opportunity of her ſilence, to relate the

manner in which ſhe came there, the treatment ſhe met with, and the terror in which ſhe lived; all in the moſt moving manner, mingling her tears with her entreaties for her aſſiſtance. Young Maria was moved extremely; ſhe had a tender diſpoſition. and knew how to feel for others. She wiſhed to have the power of relieving Cornelia from her ſufferings; but told her, as ſhe was ſo cloſe a priſoner, ſhe knew not how to effect it. She enquired where Monſieur de Rhée was. Cornelia told her; and likewiſe, that ſhe was ſometimes left by him a quarter of an hour, or more, in that ſpot, as he looked on it to be the moſt ſecure place wherein he could quit her, if any thing called him away. All they could then do, was to agree to meet there, whenever Cornelia was left alone; and in the mean time, to think of all the means to contrive her eſcape, and conſult upon it; Maria promiſing to watch every night for her coming. She had got out of ſight but juſt before Monſieur de Rhée appeared; who found Cornelia leſs melancholy than he had left her, or than he had lately ſeen her. They walked a long time; her converſation was leſs conſtrained than uſual, and he was more than ever unwilling to break it off. However, finding ſhe grew weary, he conducted her to her apartment, and with regret left her. The reſt of the night ſhe ſpent in forming ſchemes for freeing herſelf from her priſon.

The next evening Monſieur de Rhée again uſed all arguments and entreaties to induce her to marry him. But finding her as inexorable as ever, his paſſion being heightened by deſpair, he aſſured her ſhe ſhould ſee how little cruelty availed his priſoner; for that force ſhould give him

him what her conſent would not. And he begun to treat her with great familiarity; threatening to kill her, if ſhe did not forbear reſiſtance. She told him, that the fulfilling his menaces would be the greateſt bleſſing ſhe ever hoped to receive: that ſhe looked on death as her deliverer, and would joyfully meet the ſword he intended ſhould frighten her: that in the happieſt part of her life, ſhe could never have be n mean enough to have preſerved it by the loſs of her honour: and that it would be ſtrange indeed, if under her preſent misfortunes, ſhe ſhould be ſo poorly fond of it. When he found his threats had no power, he was determined to overcome her weakneſs, tho' no danger could conquer her courage. She knew herſelf very unequal to him, and fearful that her reſiſtance muſt prove vain in time, ſhe reſolved to try other methods of ſaving herſelf. She conjured him to have pity upon her; to have pity on himſelf, and not load his conſcience with a crime, for which it muſt bitterly upbraid him. She urged all the ties of virtue, religion, and honour: but he was deaf to all, and at that time was ſenſible of nothing but his brutal paſſion. Finding her ſtrength was her only dependance, ſhe exerted it to the utmoſt, broke from him, and with the quickneſs of lightening flew towards her cloſet. Fortunately for her, De Rhée's foot ſlipped as he made an effort to follow and ſeize her, and his falling with ſome violence gave her time to lock and bar the door.

There ſhe fainted away. He could, thro' the key-hole, ſee her ſtretched on the ground, and in appearance dead. This ſight brought back his tenderneſs, which had been turned into violence and deſperation. At that moment he wiſhed to

get in only to aſſiſt her; but to attempt it was vain; he called to her, entreated her to return to life, as if ſhe could have heard him, and had the power of complying with his requeſt. He ſtamped and raved, curſed himſelf, his paſſion, and his fate; in ſhort, in the fury of his madneſs, he made ſo great a clamour, as brought his truſty ſervant to him; but it was not in his power to relieve or pacify him. Cornelia continued in that condition for ſome hours, and as his fear that ſhe was really dead, increaſed with the length of time ſhe appeared to be ſo, his rage increaſed in proportion, till at length he perceived ſome ſigns of returning life. This quieted his madneſs. His anxiety in watching her recovery, and the fear of alarming her by his voice, made him obſerve in ſilence the returning of the blood to her lips, then the beginning of motion, and, at laſt, the return of ſenſe; but he ſoon perceived that was no bleſſing to her, for without riſing from the ground, ſhe burſt into a flood of tears, accompanied with ſighs that moved him extremely, and made him ſee, that whilſt unanimated, ſhe was leſs to be pitied than in her preſent grief. He ventured to ſpeak to her, begged for forgiveneſs, and promiſed never more to offend her, and now intreated her as fervently as ſhe had before done him, in a better cauſe. This rouzed her from her lethargy of grief; and ſhe told him, ſhe wondered he could aſk for mercy from her, after having ſo inhumanly denied it to her, when her tears and prayers could not bring him to virtue for one moment. Did he hope ſhe could be ſo eaſily moved to ſtifle a juſt reſentment? She could neither pity nor eſteem him; he had deſerved her hate, and had obtained it.

She

She adviſed him to repent ſo ſincerely as to amend; to controul paſſions that now got the better of every good principle in him, or fear every miſery that a man blinded to reaſon and virtue could fall into. This advice ſhe gave him for his own ſake; as for her, ſhe had nothing to do with any future amendments; ſhe knew him too bad, to expect them time enough for her preſervation; his promiſes ſhe could as little truſt to: how could ſhe believe a man in whom ſhe had found no regard for either honour or truth? She had once happily eſcaped his brutality, but as the ſame bleſſing might not be always granted her, ſhe would never put herſelf in the ſame danger; that ſhe was bound in duty to preſerve her life, but was obliged by ties not leſs ſtrong, to preſerve her innocence. If duties thus diſagreed, the leſſer muſt be given up. In dying, her virtue was for ever ſafe; in prefering life, ſhe muſt expect to loſe the other, in hopes of prolonging an odious and precarious exiſtence. She told him, ſhe was firmly reſolved; therefore deſired he would leave her in peace, and be content with having ſhortened her life, without depriving her of quiet during the ſmall time it had to laſt.

Tho' he believed this was only the effect of the violent agitation of her mind, and that as ſoon as it was a little abated, ſhe would lay all ſuch thoughts aſide; yet he could not forbear trying to haſten that calm, by giving her all the aſſurance of future ſafety that words could expreſs. He declared how much he deteſted himſelf for his attempt, and how glad he was that ſhe eſcaped it; adding every thing he thought might plead for his forgiveneſs or excuſe. She made him no anſwer: wrapt up in her own reflexions,

ſhe ſcarce heard what he ſaid. Every moment ſtrengthened her reſolution of remaining where ſhe was. Could ſhe have got ſuſtenance without removing her defence, ſhe would have preferred that cloſely impriſoned ſtate, to the putting an end to her life by a refuſal of all aſſiſtance. She could not hope to receive any thing unaccompanied by Monſieur De Rhée. His admittance muſt be a neceſſary conſequence of her opening the door, and expoſe her to all former dangers, from a man made ſtill more deſperate by her reſiſtance.

A day and half paſſed thus, during which Monſieur De Rhée never ceaſed uſing all means to prevail on her to change her reſolution. When he deſpaired of ſucceſs, he told her, that tho' he could have been glad to have kept her being with him a ſecret, he had now given up all thoughts of it, and ſhould inſtantly order ſome men to enter her cloſet by the ſky-light, unleſs ſhe would voluntarily leave it, and thereby bind him to her by the ſtrongeſt obligations. His menaces had not the effect he expected. If ſhe was doomed to live there, ſhe choſe that it ſhould become publick, and wiſhed to ſee the men that were to drive her from her ſanctuary. She therefore perſiſted in her refuſal. And he was forced to execute what he had mentioned. Accordingly it was not long before ſhe ſaw two men juſt over her room, who got down into it, and began to remove the bar, and to unlock the door. She addreſſed them with all the eagerneſs that the anxiety of her mind gave her; ſhe begged, ſhe entreated them to put a letter into the poſt for Madame Du Maine, if they would do nothing greater towards the aſſiſtance of the moſt miſer-

able

able of women. Tho' the men ſeemed touched with her appearance, it conduced little to her benefit, the fear of Monſieur De Rh e forcing them to appear obdurate, whatever they might be in reality. When they opened the door he who had been waiting impatiently at the outſide of it, came in. He tried to ſooth her grief and quiet her fears; but ſhe was too much overcome by them to be eaſily relieved. He had ſome broths, and ſuch things as he thought moſt proper for one who had faſted ſo long, brought to her, and prevailed upon her to ea a little. The many pardons he begged for his late behaviour, the reſpect he ſhewed her, the proteſtations he made of always continuing the ſame, and never more relapſing into his former faults, gave her ſome room to hope, that his ſentiments, which then ſeemed good, might remain ſo a little time; and that before his unruly paſſions got the better of them, ſhe might, by the charitable aſſiſtance of Maria, find means of making her eſcape. He continued his endeavours to reconcile Cornelia to him, and ſhewed the fondeſt anxiety leſt her health ſhould have been impaired by what ſhe had ſuffered; and, at length, he obtained her conſent to renew their former way of life.

The evening of the day after ſhe had been driven out of her little fortreſs, they walked in the gardens. She had written what ſhe deſired Maria to do for her; which was, if ſhe poſſibly could, to get a man and horſes for himſelf and for Cornelia, to wait every night at the moſt convenient place for her to meet him; that ſhe would reward him greatly; ſo well that he ſhould never be obliged to return into that country

again, if he feared Monſieur De Rhée's anger. She deſired he would buy the horſes as ſecretly as poſſible, and incloſed money enough to pay for them. She added, that ſhe ſhould think herſelf eternally obliged to Maria, if, after ſhe had ſettled the above-mentioned affair, ſhe would then let her thro' that door by which Maria uſed to go into the houſe; and put her into the right way to find the man and horſes: that Monſieur De Rhée would not ſuſpect any thing of the eſcape, nor give the alarm immediately, ſo that Maria by putting herſelf into bed, might avoid the ſuſpicion of having been an aſſiſtant: that it was needleſs to ſay any thing more to prove the neceſſity of ſecrecy in this affair: that if Maria found, after a thorough ſearch, that no one was to be got who would undertake to be her guide, ſhe then begged her to put into the poſt a letter incloſed, which was to inform Madame Du Maine where ſhe was, and what ſhe ſuffered.

As ready as ſhe had got her inſtructions, ſhe was not much nearer departing; for notwithſtanding the diligence ſhe had uſed, three nights paſſed before ſhe had an opportunity of ſpeaking to Maria. However, the fourth, Monſieur De Rhée diſappeared, Cornelia gave her the paper, and ſhe again returned to her concealment, till ſhe could ſafely go back into the houſe. Cornelia now felt the pleaſure of hope, to which ſhe had been long a ſtranger; this night and the next day were the happieſt ſhe had felt for ſome time paſt. The flattering expectation of getting out of a place ſo juſtly dreaded and deteſted by her, filled her with joy ſeldom felt by thoſe who have lived conſtantly in proſperity.

But

But yet this joy was interrupted by fear and anxiety, leſt her attempt ſhould not ſucceed.

Two nights paſſed before ſhe was left alone. The watchful Maria then told her, in few words, ſhe had got a man who would undertake to be her guide, and now only waited to get horſes and neceſſary equipments; as it was uncertain how ſoon they might be got, ſhe adviſed her to be conſtantly prepared for going off at the ſhorteſt warning; and told her, ſhe would not meet her again till every thing was ready for her eſcape, as it was beſt not unneceſſarily to run the hazard of being diſcovered. This Cornelia agreed to, with many thanks for the joyful account ſhe had given her.

Monſieur De Rhée found the agreeable effects of it; for it gave her a flow of ſpirits that he had not ſeen her in ſince ſhe was at his caſtle. As his vanity made him always ready to hope, he conceived ſome from this return of vivacity. He imagined from it that he was become leſs diſagreeable to her, tho' ſhe muſt have ſeen plainer than ever, that he did not mean to give her her liberty, ſince the deſpair he had beheld her in could not prevail ſo far upon him. Four days dragged on heavily for her before ſhe was left a moment alone in the garden. Her impatience grew very painful to her, and her ſpirits began to ſink again by ſuch a ſucceſſion of diſappointments. However, at laſt, the wiſhed-for night came. Monſieur De Rhée thought he heard ſome people at a diſtance in the garden, fearing, that what was in fact only an attempt to ſteal fruit, might be aimed at delivering Cornelia, whom Madame Du Maine's ſuſpicions might perhaps gueſs was there. He left her, and whilſt he went to diſcover what the noiſe proceeded from, Maria came immediately to Cornelia, and telling her every thing was ready for her eſcape, as

it

it had been for three nights paſt, guided her to the door.

Cornelia made her a more conſiderable preſent than was ſuitable to her preſent circumſtances; but ſhe could better bear to be without money, than even to appear to be without gratitude. She told her ſhe ſhould ſoon give her farther proofs how much ſhe thought herſelf obliged, and begged that whenever ſhe could be of the leaſt ſervice to her in any way, ſhe would let her know, and ſhe ſhould eſteem it a new obligation, to give her an opportunity of ſhewing the ſenſe ſhe had of, and making ſome kind of recompence for, the former; an equal return ſhe hoped Maria would never ſtand in need of, but whatever it was, ſhe ſhould not fail to ſhew her time could not efface gratitude, or make her think ſhe could ever ſufficiently rep y what ſhe had done for her; ſhe owed her more than life, it was therefore but a ſmall return to offer her all the ſervices of it, whenever ſhe would do her the favour to employ her. There was time for little more to paſs between them, before they had reached the road, wherein, tho' at ſome diſtance, Cornelia's horſes ſtayed for her. Here they took leave, each went on their way with equal ſpeed, one to keep clear from being ſuſpected, and the other to get away from that deteſtable houſe as quick as poſſible.

She ſoon found her horſes; and mounted hers directly, telling the man to ride on with the utmoſt ſpeed, and on the firſt opportunity to turn into a bye-road, in hopes of being the ſooner concealed from any ſearch Monſieur De Rh e might make after her. The night was not a dark one, and yet not ſo light as to endanger their being ſeen at a diſtance. By break of

day

day they were arrived at a town above twenty five miles from the Chaſteau De Rhée, unable to travel any farther in ſo fatiguing a manner, without reſt for which her fears would not allow her time She took a poſt-chaiſe, and going near twenty miles in that, after half an hour's refreſhment, got on her horſe again, and proceeded about ten farther in a bye-road, which brought them to a little village, where ſhe determined to ſtay. She thought ſhe could not find a place more fit for the concealment that was neceſſary to her. It was built in a deep valley, and great part of it was encompaſſed with a wood. It was ſo little to be ſeen from the road, that the guide could not have found it, if he had not been once carried there by his father, who was bred up in it.

Her firſt thought was to endeavour to get a lodging; which ſhe did with an old woman, whom her guide told her had the reputation of being quiet and honeſt. It differed much from what ſhe had ever yet lived in. The cottage was a very poor one, and her chamber would but juſt hold her bed, a chair, and a table. But as her mind was not contracted with her habitation, ſhe felt no uneaſineſs from the ſize and meanneſs of it. She looked on it as an aſylum from the worſt of evils. What would have rendered it agreeable to any one, was the wood near which it ſtood. Thro' this wood ran a clear murmuring rivulet, which with the great variety of birds, that ſeemed, like her, to take refuge there from their perſecutors, made a moſt delightful harmony, moſt of all pleaſing to perſons, poſſeſſed with a tender paſſion, who naturally love the ſoothing murmurs of a rivulet gentle as their own ſouls, and the muſick of the birds, who ſeem to ſpend their lives in love.

As

As ſoon as ſhe had got a little reſt, of which ſhe ſtood in great need, ſhe called for the man that came with her, deſigning to employ him farther, if his capacity anſwered the opinion ſhe had received of him from the quickneſs and diſcretion with which he had aſſiſted her eſcape. She found he was a poor labourer, and that in the province he had left, they were over-ſtocked with ſuch, therefore he was glad of an opportunity of trying his fortune in other places. He anſwered all ſhe aſked him with a great deal of ſenſe. This encouraged her to tell him, that as ſoon as he had ſufficiently reſted himſelf after his fatigue, ſhe had a meſſage for him, which would carry him a good long journey, but would give her the means of rewarding him in ſome meaſure directly: that all he would have to do, would be to deliver a letter into ſuch hands as ſhe ſhould direct them; to ſtay at a houſe near till he had an anſwer, and to take care that he did not let ſlip one word, which could give the leaſt ſuſpicion from whence or from whom he came, nor that he had lately taken any uncommon journey. He promiſed to obey her orders, and told her, he ſhould be ready to ſet out the next morning.

As ſhe wiſhed to relieve Madame Du Maine from the uneaſineſs ſhe knew ſhe muſt be under, and to have her advice as ſoon as poſſible, ſhe began immediately to prepare his diſpatches. She firſt told Madame Du Maine how much ſhe ſhould offend againſt the gratitude ſhe owed her, if ſhe did not ſeize the firſt moment to let her know ſhe was in health and ſafety; as ſhe could not doubt but her uſual goodneſs had made her very uneaſy on her account, it would be no leſs

inconſiſtent

inconſiſtent with her regard and affection, to delay ſending her word what had occaſioned an abſence that might have hurt her in her good opinion, which of all things was moſt eſſential to her happineſs; when affection for the beſt of friends, and ſelf-love join in the ſame deſire, the gratification will be impatiently ſought for. She then related all that had happened to her ſince their ſeparation, gave an account of the place ſhe was at, and begged her advice as to what ſhe ſhould do henceforward. She cautioned her not to let the leaſt hint of her eſcape, reach the ears of Monſieur and Madame De Limon, or any one elſe but the perſon to whom ſhe ſhould encloſe the letters. She told her that as ſhe had received many favours from her, and had had the moſt preſſing offers of more, ſhe was encouraged to beg, that inſtead of the kind intentions ſhe had had for her, ſhe would be ſo kind to ſettle an annuity of twenty pound per annum on the man who had ventured ſo much for her deliverance. This would make her very happy, as it would acquit her towards him of the obligation ſhe had to him, and ſhe could never again want money ſo much as now, to enable her to make ſuch an acknowledgement. She made very circumſtantial enquiries, after Madame Du Maine's health; and begged a ſpeedy anſwer. This ſhe incloſed to that lady's woman, who ſhe knew loved her too well not to be rejoiced to hear of her, and to be as ſecret as ſhe could wiſh.

The next morning her peaſant Moullant ſet out with it, promiſing to uſe his utmoſt diligence in his journey. She had paſſed herſelf off in the village for a farmer's daughter, and Moullant for his ſervant; and that upon her mother-in-law's

uſing

uſing her ill, he had ſent her to be out of the way, till he had determined what to do with her. The enjoyment of liberty, eaſe, and tranquillity, might have been ſufficient to make one happy who had been kept ſo long in the cruelleſt captivity, and had lived in grief and terror. And her habitation had great charms for her, and ſhe would have felt a conſtant joy, had ſhe had Bernardo with her. She would then have poſſeſſed her utmoſt wiſh, and could have been well pleaſed to have lived for ever in that obſcurity and ſolitude. But his abſence embittered all her pleaſures. She did but half enjoy liberty, as it could not procure her a ſight of him; and ſolitude loſt its tranquillity, when ſhe reflected on the alterations abſence might have made in his heart. However, unlike moſt people in her ſituation, ſhe did not indulge melancholy reflections; and thereby ſuffered leſs pain than many give themſelves: for when her own thoughts were gloomy and unpleaſant, ſhe had recourſe to thoſe of others, and amuſed herſelf by reading.

But we muſt leave her in her cottage, and accompany her meſſenger to Madame Du Maine's, where he delivered his letter with all poſſible circumpection. She who had remained in the utmoſt anxiety, and now began to deſpair of Cornelia's being alive, could not but be raiſed to the higheſt exceſs of joy at receiving a token of her ſafety. She opened the letter with extreme impatience. The contents of it moved her greatly: ſhe wept for the miſery Cornelia had endured; and wept tears of joy for her being freed from it. She felt by turns every paſſion. Joy and grief filled her mind alternately. It was long before ſhe was calm enough

to

to conſider the advice required of her, but deſirous of complying with her requeſt, that the meſſenger might have his anſwer ſoon, ſhe brought herſelf to the neceſſary compoſure as ſoon as poſſible, and wrote the following letter.

My dear Cornelia,

'IT is impoſſible to expreſs the joy I received 'from the ſight of your hand. I had given 'myſelf up to deſpair of ever hearing any more of 'my deareſt child, and could not help fearing I 'had been in ſome meaſure the cauſe of the mis-'fortunes that had befallen you, who had given me 'more happineſs than I can ever now receive. I 'was tranſported to find the fear of your death 'groundleſs: but when I read your letter, how 'was I moved at your relation of what you had 'ſuffered! How ſincerely did I deteſt Monſieur 'De Rhée, and admire you? The pain I felt 'in thinking of your unhappineſs, for ſome time 'made me inſenſible of the high and unequalled 'ſatisfaction I afterwards found, in reflecting 'you had eſcaped it all, and that all you had 'gone through ſerved only to exalt your virtue; 'that inſtead of recollecting it with part of the 'pain it gave when it happened, it can only fill 'you with the moſt agreeable reflections, thoſe 'that ariſe from triumphant virtue. It has been 'a received maxim, that God gives to no one 'more than they can bear: could one have fore-'ſeen what misfortunes were prepared for you 'one might have doubted it; but the event ſeems 'to juſtify the maxim. Therefore repine not, 'ſince you have been tried in nothing to which 'you were not equal; but conſider that theſe 'ſufferings have been neceſſary to ſhew, that

'as

'as much as they exceed what are commonly 'undergone, ſo far you exceed your own 'ſpecies. As that can ſcarce appear in a fairer 'light, I hope you will no more meet with any 'interruptions to the happineſs you deſerve. 'I wiſh I was with you in the retirement you 'deſcribe ſo truly like one that is diſpoſed by 'the ſtate of her mind to delight in every thing. 'For my own part, my pleaſure and happineſs 'left me with you. You know how little reaſon 'I had to eſteem my grand-children before this 'villanous attempt on you; but I could forgive 'them diſobedience, though not treachery. I 'have never been able to clear them, in my opi-'nion, of having had ſome hand in what has 'befallen you. This has made their ſight uneaſy 'to me, and yet I cannot get courage enough 'to undertake the management of my own af-'fairs, and therefore for my eaſe in that point, 'am forced to endure them in my houſe. They 'have indeed done every thing to make me eaſy, 'but that is not ſufficient after having ſo mate-'rially diſturbed my quiet, and broke through 'the ſatisfaction of my life. I would wiſh you 'to come in their place, if you think you 'will be ſecure from freſh attacks. I am ſo 'much afraid of what might happen, that I can-'not deſire it. In my opinion, whilſt you can 'remain where you are without being diſcovered, 'I do not ſee you can be in a better place. As 'ſoon as you have reaſon to ſuſpect that the 'ſearch will extend there, come to —— giving 'me notice before, and I will meet you, and 'provide a place for your reception. The ſafeſt 'for you would be to leave the kingdom, and 'you ſhall have ſuch conſtant remittances as

'ſhall

'ſhall make it perfectly convenient in that re-
'ſpect. If you do not approve that, the beſt
'thing you can do ſurely will be to get into a
'large family, at a great diſtance, on the moſt
'tolerable conditions; and ſuch a place I believe
'I could obtain for you. My health is as good
'as age and grief would let it be; now that it
'has but one of thoſe to ſtruggle with, I do not
'doubt but it will improve. I am rejoiced that
'your conſtitution has not ſuffered more, and
'hope before long I ſhall have the happineſs of
'ſeeing you in good health. The annuity you
'kindly give me an opportunity of beſtowing on
'your attendant, is too ſmall for a man who has
'in a manner reſtored you to me. For though
'you are not with me, yet the ſatisfaction I feel
'from the knowledge of your health and ſafety
'is; and that is of infinite comfort to me. You
'muſt therefore give me leave to double what
'you mention, and incloſed I ſend you the bond,
'which obliges me and my heirs to the regular
'payment of it. Forgive the trifle I ſend you
'by him, it ſhall be followed with more, to any
'ſum you wiſh; and I beg you will not controul
'your inclination in any expence, for money
'can in no way give me ſo much pleaſure as
'by contributing, though in the ſmalleſt degree,
'to your ſatisfaction. Adieu, deareſt Cornelia;
'believe me and all that belongs to me moſt
'ſincerely yours.'

She accompanied this letter with two hundred Louis-d'ors, and made Moullant a preſent of twenty. The poor man was tranſported with the poſſeſſion of a ſum he had never before ſeen together. It is eaſy to imagine his

his diligence was not ſlackened by the joy of his mind. He returned ſo ſpeedily to Cornelia, that notwithſtanding the impatience with which ſhe waited for him, yet he arrived before he was expected. The affection Madame Du Maine expreſſed for her, though it was not a new bleſſing, gave her freſh pleaſure, after having ſo long been deprived of receiving any tokens of it. What ſhe had done for Moullant gave her true ſatisfaction, and ſhe would not defer communicating it to him. The poor man fell upon his knees, quite in an extaſy, and could not contain himſelf for ſome days, but was continually breaking out into exclamations on his own good fortune. She was ſurprized to ſee one who had been born and bred in poverty, no better reconciled to it by cuſtom than to dread it ſo much, as a man muſt do to feel ſuch exceeding joy at ſeeing himſelf delivered from it: ſhe had the curioſity to enquire whether he had ſuffered more than were the common conſequences of poverty. He complained of little, but that he had for ſome years been hugely fond of a young woman who he was ſure would have followed him to any place where he could get a livelihood; for that nothing but the want of that had prevented them from marrying long ago. She was diverted with the natural way in which he related his love, but was a little afraid leſt he ſhould be in too great haſte to inform his miſtreſs of his new acquiſition, and thereby give room for her being diſcovered. She entreated him not to write to her till ſhe gave him leave, and promiſed on that condition ſhe would furniſh their houſe, and ſtock them with every thing uſeful. She told him that what he had done for her would ceaſe

ceaſe to be a benefit if it was known. His gratitude ſo far got the better of his love, that he promiſed to forbear all correſpondence with his miſtreſs as long as Cornelia could command.

At ſome of the inns at which he ſtopped in his journey, he heard that men were out in ſearch of a young lady: by circumſtances he could not doubt ſhe was the perſon ſought for. He told her of it, and likewiſe an oath he was told one of the parties had made, to leave no place in the kingdom unſearched. The purſuit had been chiefly on the road between the Chaſteau de Rhée aud Madame du Maine's. Theſe accounts gave ſome fear to Cornelia, though ſhe thought her retreat as little likely to be diſcovered as poſſible. However, ſhe ſent him once more to Madame Du Maine, ordering him to travel only by night, for fear of being known by any of the parties he ſpoke of. She wrote Madame Du Maine word what ſhe had heard, which made her wiſh ſhe could find her a place in ſuch a family as ſhe mentioned, (in caſe ſhe ſhould be obliged to leave her preſent habitation) where the number would make her ſafe from inſults and ſecure from being ſeized: for that ſhe could not think of going into another kingdom, ſhe was too young and too inexperienced to be able to conduct herſelf properly in ſo difficult an affair. Beſides, that ſhe had hitherto been expoſed to ſo many misfortunes, that ſhe could not help dreading the future, or ſuſpecting herſelf of ſome fault that had brought them upon her ſo thick, ſince the little time ſhe had been under her own direction: that with this notion ſhe could not venture herſelf out of the kingdom, inhabited by her only friend, and where ſhe might

might be obſerved: for probably ſhe ſhould be near to the place where that friend was, and in her meet with a kind and affectionate ſupport and protectreſs.

Madame Du Maine ſent her an anſwer, the beſt calculated to raiſe her ſpirits and quiet her mind. She deſired her not to reproach herſelf; for her behaviour was in ever particular a worthy pattern for that of every other woman; and if the decrees of providence had not been unalterable, muſt have ſecured her from the misfortunes that have befallen her. She promiſed to do every thing ſhe deſired, and adviſed her to follow the plan ſhe had given her in her firſt letter, in caſe ſhe ſhould be moleſted in her little aſylum. Cornelia having thus ſettled the beſt ſcheme ſhe could, tried to let her cautions be mixed with as little fear as poſſible, that her peace of mind might be as little interrupted as the nature of the caſe would admit. She amuſed herſelf with obſerving the cuſtoms of her neighbours. The contented way of life they led pleaſed her much. The luxury of the nation had never ſpread itſelf to that little village. The land for ſome miles round them was barren and rocky, and the roads extremely bad, which prevented their having much communication with any people beyond the village. Every family had a few acres of ground for the whole of their poſſeſſions. This produced them ſuch a quantity of herbs as ſerved for their ſupport. There was ſeldom any meat eat amongſt them; none of them having land enough to keep any number of cattle. Part of it was ſowed with hemp, which they ſpun for their cloaths; the only ſort they had. Every thing they wore they contrived to make among themſelves, and the

only

only way of payment was out of the produce of their land; each contributed their ſuperfluity to their neighbours aſſiſtance, which kept up a friendly intercourſe and good fellowſhip amongſt them. By inter-marriages they were almoſt all related, and lived ſo amicably that it appeared a large family, rather than a village compoſed of ſeparate tenements. The men took care of the cultivation of their ſmall portion of land; the women's province was, to tend their children, knit, ſpin, and do all the houſehold buſineſs: all which things the men aſſiſted in, when not employed in tillage. The huſbands partook of their wives work, the young men of their miſtreſs's.

A man would never have gained a ſmile from one of thoſe young maidens, who had thought the beſt way to ſhew his love was by whiſpering tender things in her ear, and languiſhing and ſighing by her ſide; his love would have been judged leſs than his lazineſs. He who knit or ſpun moſt, or otherwiſe ſhewed his induſtry in the moſt effectual manner, was looked on as the trueſt lover. In fine weather they generally left their houſes, and ſat on roots of trees in the wood, all making a joyful ſociety. The vanity of the young women conſiſted in the aſſiſtance they had received from their lovers. In this they uſed to vie with one another; but ſometimes one remarkably pretty would have two or three ſwains at a time, all contending for the prize by their induſtry. Boys and girls indifferently, were bred up to buſineſs from three years old. The inhabitants of this place appeared a nation by themſelves. Cornelia would ſometimes ſit amongſt them with great pleaſure in the wood, to ſee their happineſs,

hear their natural untaught reflections, and obſerve the general amity. The tenderneſs of the particular ties were exceſſively agreeable to her. She uſed to aſk queſtions about moſt of the young people, who ſat in couples; and found that the loves of many had ſubſiſted from their birth. The women declared their ſentiments as freely as the men; their reſerve gave no pain to the men, whoſe innocence and purity were ſo equal that they never were ſo preſuming as to give fears to the women. They all appeared like our firſt parents before the fall; their innocence as unblemiſhed; their happineſs as uninterrupted; and their tenderneſs as delicate.

To behave with good nature and affection to thoſe they were united to, was looked on as ſo neceſſary a point, that if any offended againſt it, they were immediately excluded from their ſociety: no one would ſpeak or ſhew the leaſt ſigns of acquaintance with any ſuch. The reaſon they gave for this ſeverity, was, that whoever could not behave well to a perſon whom they had preferred to all others, one whoſe diſpoſition they had good opportunities to know, to whoſe happineſs they had undertaken to contribute, as far as in them lay, could never make a fit member for any ſociety. It is to be obſerved, that as there was no inequality of fortunes, here marriages were made only through a natural liking: they had nothing to tempt one another to ſell themſelves for the gratification of their vanity; and as parents could not be biaſſed by covetouſneſs, where every one was equally poor, they never thwarted their children's inclinations. They ſaid that they could not expect them to perform the fatigues of a family with the care and chearfulneſs

they

they ought, unleſs love was their ſupport under it; and therefore their children's taſtes, and not theirs, were to be gratified. By theſe means, to behave well to their partner in wedlock, was ſo generally the inclination of moſt, and the intereſt of all, that an unhappy marriage was not to be found among them once in a century.

Cornelia could gladly have ſpent her life in this place: but ſhe had not been in it above ſeven weeks, when Moullant came one day in a great hurry, and told her, that as he was walking to a little village within about five miles, he met a man who informed him, by way of news, that about half a dozen of men were ſearching every houſe in it for a young woman, knowing that armed as they were, none of the inhabitants would dare to reſiſt them. I ſuppoſe, continued the man, you will have a viſit from them to-morrow, for they intend to go all about the country, by what I can learn. However, they do no harm; but they frightened us at firſt, as we did not know but they might deſign to carry off ſome of our young laſſes. Moullant having heard this, turned back inſtead of purſuing his way. It was then late in the evening, but Cornelia ſaw ſhe had no time to loſe. She ordered her horſes, rewarded her landlady liberally, and ſet out directly towards the place Madame Du Maine had mentioned to her. She travelled hard all night; but next day conſidering the danger of meeting her purſuers, ſhe determined to diſguiſe herſelf, and to continue her journey on horſe-back no longer. She pitched upon the dreſs of a ſtudent of one of the univerſities, as it preſerved the de-

cency of her own habit. She ſent Moullant before her to the firſt great town to buy her one, ſhe waited for his return, and juſt before ſhe went into the town put it on. Thus diſguiſed, ſhe ventured to travel in a poſt-chaiſe; and making her guide put a patch on one eye to prevent his being known, ſhe travelled on with more eaſe both of mind and body, till ſhe got to her journey's end.

She then diſpatched him to give notice to Madame Du Maine, who came to her as ſoon as ſhe heard where ſhe was. The meeting was very joyful on both ſides, but was much troubled by conſidering that a ſeparation was ſo ſoon to follow it. Madame Du Maine endeavoured to prevail on Cornelia to come to her houſe; which, if Madame and Monſieur De Limon were removed to any other habitation, ſhe thought might be ſafe, and in the mean time Cornelia might be concealed. She abſolutely refuſed to comply, and prevailed on her friend to think no more of it. Madame Du Maine then ſent to a lady that lived in the next province, tho' at a great many leagues diſtance, to let her know that ſhe could ſend her the perſon ſhe had mentioned to her, as one ſhe might poſſibly get to educate her daughter; and that ſhe could aſſure her ſhe ſhould ſend her a very great treaſure. The lady, whom we ſhall call Madame De La Roche, wrote back, after many thanks for the ſervice Madame Du Maine had done her, that ſhe ſhould be glad of her as ſoon as ſhe pleaſed. As ſoon as Cornelia was equipped with every thing neceſſary, ſhe was to ſet out.

The danger of being diſcovered by Octavio, being, by the long time that had intervened,

vened, much abated, Cornelia, before ſhe parted from Madame Du Maine, informed her of her birth, and gave her a minute account of all that had happened to her before ſhe was acquainted with her. Madame Du Maine made her a preſent of bonds, amounting to the value of five thouſand pounds, offering to receive the intereſt and remit it to her. She told her ſhe gave her this, not as all ſhe was welcome to, but that ſhe might be at liberty to leave the place ſhe was going to, as ſoon as ſhe thought herſelf ſafe from violence. It is ſo difficult and ſo unneceſſary to deſcribe what is felt by a grateful heart at receiving any great benefit, that I ſhall not attempt to ſay what Cornelia's ſenſe of this goodneſs was: thoſe who have gratitude can better feel it than words can expreſs it; and thoſe who have it not, cannot underſtand the deſcription. It is ſufficient to ſay, it made the impreſſion it ought; and that her acknowledgments were ſo ſincere and affectionate, that they gave Madame Du Maine more pleaſure, than the occaſion of them had given Cornelia. Many tears were ſhed by both at their taking leave of each other, and with many good wiſhes on each ſide they parted. It was agreed that Cornelia ſhould wear her diſguiſe till ſhe came near Madame De La Roche's houſe; and that Moullant might be ignorant of the place ſhe was going to, ſhe diſmiſſed him with a gratuity of thirty pounds to furniſh his houſe, before ſhe ſet out on this new journey; not that ſhe was apprehenſive of his betraying her, but ſhe feared that in converſation with his miſtreſs, or with others, he might inadvertently let fall ſome expreſſions, from

whence the place of her abode might be eaſily gathered.

The ſecond day of her journey, about noon, her chaiſe overtook ſome men on horſeback, amongſt whom, to her inexpreſſible terror, ſhe ſaw the ſervant that waited on Monſieur De Rhée when ſhe was with him. The fear that her diſguiſe would not conceal her from his knowledge, almoſt deprived her of ſenſe; but the neceſſity of doing nothing to excite his obſervation or ſuſpicion, gave her reſolution to overcome the ſudden ſhock, and to hide her aching heart under a chearful eaſy countenance. Great power over herſelf was requiſite to enable her to do this, for they travelled together above two leagues, ſhe not daring to ſpeak to her poſtillion to alter his pace. One of them thinking her what her dreſs implied ſhe was, began to talk to her. It is eaſy to imagine her anſwers were not very lively, tho' ſhe was attacked with mirth. In being obliged to ſpeak, ſhe was every moment in danger of being diſcovered, when ſhe was unexpectedly relieved at the meeting of two roads, by their taking the contrary one from that which ſhe purſued. Tho' the reſt of her journey paſſed unattended with any accident, yet ſhe had not recovered this ſhocking alarm when ſhe got to Madame De La Roche's houſe, where ſhe was received in the moſt obliging manner by that lady, her ſon and two daughters. Her perſon filled them all with ſurprize. They had never ſeen a woman of ſo much beauty and dignity; for a faultleſs form is ſeldom met with, the charms of one part of the perſon being generally qualified by the blemiſhes of the other. Tho' ſhe raiſed their admiration, ſhe did not diſpoſe all

of

of them in her favour. Henrietta, the eldeſt daughter, was too much inclined to envy, not to feel ſome the firſt moment of her appearance; but the footing Madame Du Maine had introduced her upon was ſuch, that ſhe was not ſubjected to ſuffer many bad effects from it. She was to be with them as a companion, to have no wages; and her only buſineſs was to take care of the education of Lucinda, the youngeſt daughter. The appearance of this young lady immediately prejudiced Cornelia in her favour; and ſhe afterwards found, with the utmoſt ſatisfaction, that this favourable opinion fell ſhort of what was Lucinda's due.

It may be proper here to let the reader into the characters of this family. Madame De La Roche was near fifty years old. In her youth ſhe had been handſome, tho' the regularity of her features had been a good deal diſgraced by a countenance that was but a ſmall recommendation of her temper, and which did not belie it; for ſhe was haughty, paſſionate, and ſelf-intereſted, inclined naturally to covetouſneſs, but had been kept within tolerable bounds by vanity. Her manner was polite, and her underſtanding agreeable, whenever ſhe choſe it ſhould be ſo. It had been capable of improvement, but had never been cultivated to much advantage. It was ſpecious, and had enough of that ſort of reading which ſerves to ornament converſation, and give a woman a little more the air of learned than one of that ſex ſhould wiſh to have. She had been twice married. By her firſt husband who lived a very ſhort time, ſhe had one daughter, Henrietta, whom I have mentioned; and by the ſecond, a ſon and daughter. He had been once mar-

ried alſo, and had two ſons when they were firſt united, but one of them died ſoon after. By hypocriſy and cunning, ſhe made her husbands fond of her; and by the violence of her temper, inſpired, at leaſt, an equal portion of fear. From theſe motives they had provided ſo greatly for her at their deaths, that ſhe was the richeſt widow in France.

Her eldeſt daughter Henrietta had no beauty to boaſt of; but had the misfortune to be as deſirous of admiration, and to think ſhe as well deſerved it, as if ſhe had been a model of all charms. The opinions of others differed ſo much from hers, that ſhe lived in a conſtant courſe of diſappointments, which made her very envious of thoſe who were more careſſed. Her underſtanding was tolerable, till it was perverted by a little reading and a great deal of vanity; for by theſe ſhe became a mere pedant. Her faults all ſprung from that ſource. She was naturally compaſſionate and good natured, and had ſome good principles; but vanity got the better of them all. She would do unjuſt, nay cruel things, if that ſuggeſted any thing to her, that made it neceſſary to uſe ſuch means to attain it. Her envy had no other foundation. Her reſentments were owing to the ſame cauſe, it confounded all ſenſe of right and wrong, and was equally the cauſe of both. In ſhort, if ſhe did a good action it was from the deſire of praiſe. She read, worked, dreſſed, and indeed did every thing from the ſame motive. She had no inclination to do any bad thing, if it was not ſuch as her vanity, or envy, the branch ſpringing from that ſtock, prompted her to. She was about five and twenty; which ſuperiority in age, and the unequal ſhare ſhe had of her mother's affection, gave her a

power

a power of tyrannizing over her ſiſter; who excited too much envy in her, to be well uſed by any one ſo entirely governed by it.

Lucinda was ſcarce fifteen. She was very little, but very elegantly formed, and extremely pretty. Her countenance was the moſt pleaſing that could be, lively and ſenſible, with the greateſt ſweetneſs and tenderneſs that could be mixed together; and her mind was of as pleaſing a compoſition as her face. She had great vivacity, the moſt amiable temper, and was gentle and affectionate. She was tractable, modeſt, and humble; deſirous of improvement, and induſtrious in attaining it; and grieved only that her mother had given her ſo few opportunities. It was by her entreaties, that an uncle who was fond of her, had prevailed on Madame De La Roche to enquire after ſome one capable of inſtructing her. The behaviour of her mother and ſiſter made her life but uneaſy, being continually expoſed to the ill temper of the one and the envy of the other. She was never happy but when alone, tho' her natural temper and her age diſpoſed her to company, and to take a pleaſure in the little addreſſes ſhe was ſure to meet with. She had juſt vanity enough to ſee, and be diverted by them; but not enough to think the better of herſelf for them. They appeared to her extremely trifling; and ſhe could with difficulty think any one could be uneaſy for want of them, or diſlike another woman for meeting with a greater ſhare. The fourth I mentioned on Cornelia's reception, was a brother of Lucinda's, of eighteen years of age, a good natured, well diſpoſed youth, deſigned to be bred up to the church.

It is now time to return to the company I have been ſo minutely deſcribing. Madame De La Roche was much pleaſed with Cornelia's behaviour. Lucinda was delighted: and indeed ſhe had been at firſt rejoiced to hear ſhe was young enough to be her companion and friend, and at the ſame time as capable of inſtructing her as if ſhe had been older; but there was ſomething ſo taking and ſtrikingly agreeable in Cornelia's perſon, that it would have been ſtrange if ſhe had not been better pleaſed now ſhe ſaw her, than ſhe could have been in imagination. Monſieur Du Pré, Lucinda's brother, liked her at leaſt as well as his Greek and Hebrew; and could have given up one of his future benefices for her. He found home dull while he found none but ſiſters there. This addition to the ſociety made him reliſh it much more; and he with pleaſure thought of laying aſide the dry ſtudy of divinity for her company, a matter much more pleaſing to him than the tedious controverſies between contentious cavilling churchmen.

Henrietta was the only one diſcontented, eſpecially after having attempted to make a parade of her learning, and finding herſelf, by a few words that dropt from Cornelia, ſo far behind her. At night they retired, and ſhewed Cornelia her apartment, which was next to Lucinda's chamber, and then left them. Lucinda had been impatient to tell her how fortunate ſhe thought herſelf in being under her direction, and aſſured her of the moſt implicit obedience. Cornelia expreſſed an equal ſatisfaction, in finding one who had reconciled her attendance as much to her inclination, as it was her duty. They agreed that the next day ſhould begin their ſeveral offices, the one of an inſtructor, and the other of a pupil.

Lucinda's

Lucinda's impatience being ſatisfied by this promiſe, ſhe left Cornelia to recover by reſt the fatigues of her journey; which indeed was neceſſary to her, more from the agitation her ſpirits had been in, than from the length of the journey. Quiet was never ſo comfortable to her; ſhe hoped ſhe was now ſettled in ſafety, and ſhould be no longer the ſport of fortune. With this pleaſing notion ſhe went to reſt, and having ſlept more than her uſual time waked well refreſhed. As ſoon as ſhe had unpacked and put her things in order, ſhe went into Lucinda's room, whom ſhe found up; though her mother and ſiſter, who always kept late hours, were ſtill in bed. They ſat together till the general call to breakfaſt obliged them to go down ſtairs.

When breakfaſt was over, Madame De La Roche declared, that from that moment ſhe put Lucinda under her care and direction; and charged her under pain of her diſpleaſure to pay her all poſſible obedience, which ſhe with great readineſs promiſed.

They ſoon retired together to walk over the gardens and woods, Lucinda being deſirous to ſhew them to Cornelia; who was much pleaſed with their beauty, and agreed with her little pupil to ſpend a great deal of their time in that part of them which was leaſt frequented by the reſt of the family. Cornelia found her ſcholar very docile, and was pleaſed to ſee the delight ſhe took in reading. They ſpent almoſt all their time together; and though moſt of it was employed in ſtudy, yet they found a good deal for converſation. Cornelia excuſed herſelf from going into company, and Lucinda was not permitted to be

in any. She had never been allowed more liberty than to viſit in the neighbouring village, and this liberty extended only to one lady.

Lucinda prevailed on Cornelia to accompany her to this lady's houſe, whoſe name was Julia. She was born of a noble family, was handſome, had a fine perſon, a heart that did honour to her birth, and an excellent underſtanding. Her father had been dead many years. He had left her fortune in the hands of a brother, whoſe eſtate was equal to his quality, tho' not to his expences. Theſe reduced him ſo low, that poor Julia ſeldom got any part of the intereſt of her fortune, and the principal he could not poſſibly reſtore to her. She had lived ſome years in the world, expoſed to the utmoſt difficulties for want of money. At length, deſpairing of her brother's ever becoming more juſt to her, as every year farther impaired his fortune, ſhe determined to relinquiſh a way of life ſhe could no longer ſupport, and took a reſolution of retiring into the country to live as cheap as poſſible. This village was the place ſhe fixed upon, as one where ſhe was not known, and where ſhe might live at a very ſmall expence. She took a houſe, which, except in cleanneſs, was little better than a cottage. She kept but one ſervant, and lived in the moſt ſparing manner ſhe could.

Julia had been ſettled in this place about eighteen months, and had here enjoyed a tranquility and happineſs beyond what ſhe had ever before experienced, while ſhe lived among the great. She paſſed that part of her time which was not taken up by neceſſary work, in reading. Madame De La Roche's houſe was ſo near, that a viſit from her was unavoidable. The acquaintance

tance with that family continued, though not intimately with any, except Lucinda; and ſhe was not very often permitted to viſit Julia. Cornelia approved of their friendſhip ſo much that ſhe often went with Lucinda, and helped to enliven Julia's ſolitude; who was ſo charmed with Cornelia's converſation, that in a little time it was difficult to judge whether Julia or Lucinda were fondeſt of her. Both of them had a thorough confidence in her, and found that they never communicated their uneaſineſſes to her without having them relieved by her advice.

Lucinda's greateſt concern was the diſagreeable temper of her mother and ſiſter, and the abſence of a brother, Mr. De La Roche's ſon by his firſt wife. She continually regretted the want of his company, who had been her firſt and beſt friend, and had done all he had time for towards her improvement and diverſion, having always been extremely fond of her, and truſted her with his moſt intimate thoughts almoſt from her childhood. She uſed to tell Cornelia that ſhe hoped ſhe would captivate her brother, at leaſt, enough to cure him of a violent paſſion, with which he was already poſſeſſed. "And if it ſhould turn out ſo," added Lucinda, "I adviſe you to bid adieu to your heart, for it can never reſiſt him; and yet if it ſhould ſurrender, who knows what dangers may enſue! My poor ſiſter has languiſhed and pined to no purpoſe ſo long, that if ſhe has not more patience than I can ſuſpect her of, her rage muſt ſoon exceed that of any neglected fair one in romance. I would pity her, if the perſecutions of her love and of my mother's deſire to gratify it, did not torment him ſo much that they have almoſt baniſhed him from this

this place. Deſpair muſt have cured her by this time, if her inſufferable vanity did not preſerve her from it, in direct oppoſition to all reaſon; for ſurely no one had ever leſs encouragement to hope. A match had been intended by my father and mother before his death, between theſe two children of former marriages, as ſoon as they ſhould be of a proper age. I muſt do my brother the juſtice to ſay, he never ſhewed the leaſt diſpoſition to like Henrietta; but her heart was ſo fertile a ſoil, that love grew in it to a great height, though the poor plant was never nouriſhed by the leaſt ſun-ſhine of favour."

Lucinda's fancy that her brother muſt in time grow enamoured of Cornelia, was often a ſubject for their mirth. One day Lucinda came to her with great joy, telling her, her new lover would be with them before the end of the day. "You mean," ſays Cornelia, "your brother; being your brother and my lover are very diſtinct things. Poor Du Pré who appeared ſo well diſpoſed, had ventured no farther than to hint a few douceurs, which nothing leſs ingenious than female vanity could make me know to be meant for myſelf. My dear Lucinda, I have nothing to do with lovers. I have no room for any new perſon in my heart. Your ſiſter may let her envy and jealouſy ſleep, for I ſhall not give her occaſion to exerciſe them, not willingly I am ſure; and although I might expect a declaration in my favour, if the poor man were reduced to chooſe either me or Henrietta; yet without that dreadful alternative, his heart would be pretty ſafe."

Juſt as ſhe had ſaid this, the door was opened, and Lucinda, who, by being over-againſt it, ſaw her long wiſhed for brother before he entered, ran

ran to embrace him, and met him juſt as he had got into the room. But what was her ſurprize upon finding him faint away in her arms. She called Cornelia to her aſſiſtance, and looking round, ſaw her almoſt in the ſame helpleſs condition, dumb and motionleſs. But Cornelia recovering ſooner than he did, ran with the utmoſt concern to his aſſiſtance: for this brother of Lucinda's proved to be Bernardo. From an alteration that had been made in his name ſince Cornelia ſaw him, ſhe had never flattered herſelf with the hopes of meeting him ſo ſoon. Happy it was that Bernardo had come alone to enquire after his beloved ſiſter, before he had paid his compliments to Madame De La Roche and Henrietta, who were walked out. When he came to himſelf, he uttered nothing but unconnected raptures at his good fortune, in ſo unexpectedly finding her whom he had ſo long ſought for in vain. There was nothing tender which the joy of that preſent moment did not make them ſay to each other; till Lucinda, after congratulating them on their happineſs, deſired them to conſider that prudence and a very exact government could only preſerve it: for that if they did not lay ſuch a reſtraint on themſelves as not even to be ſuſpected of any former acquaintance, they muſt loſe each other's company; and ſhe herſelf, Cornelia's converſation and inſtruction. They promiſed to act with all poſſible caution; and hoped, that the conſtraint would be rewarded by the frequent opportunities they would have of converſing together without any other witneſs than Lucinda. It was agreed, that to make this the more eaſy, and avoid giving envy or jealouſy, Cornelia ſhould be leſs with Madame De La

Roche and Henrietta than ever, and frequently retire, as from her own choice, before Lucinda left the company.

Bernardo then begged to know how he came to be ſo happy as to find his Cornelia there. Juſt as ſhe was going to anſwer his queſtion, they heard that Madame De La Roche and Henrietta were coming to them; and Cornelia had but juſt time to get into her own room, and Bernardo to receive his mother at the door. Cornelia had leiſure to compoſe her fluttered ſpirits before dinner. His were not ſo eaſily contained, and Henrietta thought herſelf obliged to him for the joy he was in, and looked upon it as the moſt favourable preſage ſhe had for a long time been flattered with.

As ſoon as dinner was over, Cornelia left them. In the pleaſing train her thoughts were in, ſhe was not to be pitied; although he could not ſhake off his company to enjoy a moment's converſation with her, till after they were gone to bed. He then came into Lucinda's room, where Cornelia met him. The two lovers were now at liberty to rejoice in their good fortune, and to aſſure each other that their hearts were not changed. But though theſe aſſurances were ſo pleaſing that they could never be too often repeated; yet Bernardo's curioſity, at length, made him renew the queſtion which Cornelia had been prevented from anſwering in the morning. She then related all that had happened to her from the time ſhe left Bernardo. Her account raiſed all the various paſſions of his mind. He trembled at the recital of the dangers ſhe had been in. Indignation and fury at the author of her calamities ſucceeded. This gave place to joy for

her eſcape; and his admiration of her virtue, ſpirit and reſolution, convinced him more than ever how much ſhe deſerved his fondeſt love. Happy in her conſtancy, and in finding her fixed with his beloved ſiſter, he paſſed great part of the night in expreſſions of the delightful ſituation of his mind. Lucinda was, at laſt, forced to put an end to this interview. Bernardo retired to his apartment; but his ſpirits were too much elevated to allow him any ſleep. Under the ſame roof with his Cornelia, after ſo long and ſo dangerous an abſence, ſhe conſtant, kind, improved in beauty, and every other charm; what lover could have ſlept!

The two lovers by converſing together, with an air of eaſe and indifference before Madame De La Roche and Henrietta, eſcaped ſuſpicion; and found means to paſs great part of every day with Lucinda. She and Cornelia never being in bed after five in the morning, and the other two ladies never forſaking theirs till ten, many hours might be appropriated to love. As Du Pré was frequently with them, it was adviſeable for their own eaſe to make a confidant of him, that they might be under no greater reſtraint than was abſolutely neceſſary; and they were the leſs unwilling to do this, as Bernardo thought he had reaſon to depend on his truth and ſecrecy, tho' he was young. They uſed often to get Julia to make one of their little morning parties. They amuſed her, and her company was perfectly agreeable to them all. Cornelia had a particular deſire to cultivate her friendſhip, in hopes of being able to prevail upon her to accept privately of a part of that income; which in the ſtation ſhe appeared in, ſhe could not ſpend, nor durſt

give

give away, ſince more than ſmall charities would have made too great an eclat. She did ſome under the name of Lucinda, and of her two brothers; but nothing that could bear much proportion to the intereſt of 5000 l. nor durſt they, for fear of offending their mother, and having their incomes leſſened, lend their names often on ſuch occaſions. Madame De La Roche allowed them handſomely; but would not have done it if ſhe had not intended they ſhould ſpend it in a manner to make it appear that ſhe did ſo. Vanity made her give, but at the ſame time it took from the pleaſure of thoſe that received, by obliging them to a certain manner of expence; with which even Bernardo, who ſeemed leaſt in her power, was obliged to comply.

The time of the lovers and their friends paſſed away in great felicity. Lucinda improved daily to ſuch a degree that it ſurprized all her relations, and delighted her uncle who had been the occaſion of her having ſo excellent an inſtructor. She read a great many hours every day, and with ſuch care as made every hour bring its improvement; but ſhe received moſt from converſations with Cornelia, ſo much above what ſhe had ever before been uſed to. Henrietta was happy in ſeeing Bernardo ſtay with more pleaſure, and appear more gay than ſhe had ever remembered him. She hoped her merit was at laſt known to him, and expected the ſenſe of it would every day ripen into love. Thus they all enjoyed either real or imaginary happineſs. Perhaps there was not in the kingdom, a family wherein an equal number of perſons were ſo happy. The two that were moſt ſo, had little more to deſire. Bernardo would indeed have wiſhed

wiſhed to ſecure and increaſe his felicity by being united to Cornelia for ever. But yet he complied with her determination, which was abſolute againſt a private marriage.

Whilſt they were thus living in a conſtant ſeries of joy, one they dearly loved was in a very different ſtate of mind; but her good nature would not allow her to trouble ſo much ſatisfaction by the communication of her uneaſineſs: what could only give pain ſhe never imparted without neceſſity. However, one day brought on that neceſſity; the reſt of the family being engaged in company, Cornelia walked out by herſelf to viſit Julia; whom, by a conſtant courſe of rain, ſhe had been prevented from ſeeing for near a week. When ſhe entered her room ſhe found her in a flood of tears. The ſight ſhocked her extremely; but hoping the cauſe was ſuch as ſhe might remove, ſhe moſt earneſtly intreated her to truſt her with it. Julia could no longer refuſe to comply with ſo ſincere and tender a friend as ſhe had found Cornelia on all occaſions. She began thus,

"Would it not appear like a diſtruſt, or an unfriendly obſtinacy, I would refuſe, my dear Cornelia, to comply with your requeſt; ſince my diſtreſs will touch your generous and tender heart. But as I believe it would not be leſs hurt by a ſilence, which you might interpret into a want of a due ſenſe of your friendſhip, I muſt obey you. You ſee the poverty which every thing belonging to me declares. You know how much in juſtice I ſhould be raiſed above it, if poſſeſſion always followed right; and that I retired from all my friends and acquaintance in hopes to live upon the little I received, which

was

was never above the tenth part of what was due to me. I could never bear to uſe people in trade as my brother did me: running in debt without a proſpect of payment, always appeared to me very criminal. This principle made me acquieſce in the way of life I have got into, and by degrees I became as happy as I could be under the ſenſe I had of my brother's unkindneſs. Perſuaded my expences could not exceed my income, I was free from the worſt of uneaſineſſes, the fear of being in debt. But yet the pain of being ill treated by one I loved ſo tenderly, who had always profeſſed the ſtrongeſt affection for me, and till my father died had ſhewn it in every thing, remained. My income is ſo trifling when compared with his, that he could ſcarce feel the juſt payment of it. He has known the difficulties it has reduced me to, and yet will not give up the ſmalleſt of his pleaſures to procure me the eaſe that in juſtice I ought to have. I ſhould be much leſs uneaſy if I could feel as little affection for him as he ſhews for me; but I look on this uſage to be the effects of a diſpoſition that leads him head-long into expence, and hurrying him away in purſuit of ambitious or vain views, prevents his thinking long enough on the ſufferings he brings on others to redreſs them. His bad actions proceed from failings, not vices. This belief nouriſhes my love for him, at the time that I grieve for being ſo little in his thoughts, and ſuffer from the train of conſequences that follow it. However, your friendſhip and that of our dear Lucinda, have made me bear it of late much better than I ever had done; and could I live on here, I ſhould in my little cottage be very happy; but I find he will not enable me

to

to live any where. He had promiſed to pay me part of the intereſt that was due to me above a month ago: as for the arrear, I did not aſk it. I have written to him often ſince the time elapſed; and to day have received a letter from his ſteward, wherein he tells me, that his lord has not any money, nor can have any theſe four months. As little as I ſpend, I have not enough by me to ſupply me with a week's maintenance. Having received nothing from him for near four years, to enable me to live here, I was obliged to ſell almoſt every thing that belonged to me, even to my very clothes and laces; which tho' they ſold for no great ſum, being all pretty old, yet the little they brought in was neceſſary for my ſupport. On this I have ſubſiſted ſince I came; but now I have not any thing left me that can ſerve for a ſupply. Living with any of my relations would be more expenſive to me than my preſent way of life; not to mention the miſery of dependence. Teach me, my dear Cornelia, how to provide for my ſupport: nature has given you ſuch a ſuperiority of underſtanding, and painful experience has ſo greatly improved it, that the old muſt beg counſel of you; the difference of age cannot make them your equals. This gives you a right to direct me, though I am ſeveral years older than yourſelf. Find out any means for me, and whatever you adviſe I will follow; but let the laſt choice be an application to my friends. They were acquainted with my circumſtances, and I would not beg for an aſſiſtance they would not give unaſked. I had rather live by my own labour, than on what people I thought my friends, and to whom I always

always was a ſincere one, might give out of ſhame and not out of love."

Cornelia rejoiced to find her grief had no other ſource; told her, ſhe could with eaſe inform her of a means of being relieved from all the difficulties ſhe laboured under. "If," ſays ſhe, "any pleaſure could ariſe to me out of your pain, I ſhould feel much from your preſent circumſtances, ſince they put it in my power to make money yield me ſome ſatisfaction. I have an income much beyond what I dare ſpend. If you, my dear Julia, do not deſpiſe me too much to receive any thing at my hands, you ſhall be freed from the difficulties you at preſent are under, and I from the ſecret pain of having unemployed money by me. I own I am exacting the greateſt favour of you that you can beſtow on me. To give, does not ſhew ſo great a part of love, as to accept: this is the greateſt ſign of a tender and perfect affection in ſuch a heart as yours. Therefore, my dear friend, make me happy by ſhewing you have this degree of affection for me; ſhew me that you look on me as another ſelf, and upon every thing I have as yours. By the generoſity of Madame Du Maine, I have a conſiderable income, tho' I have hitherto had but little uſe for it. Forgive me if I inſiſt on your ſharing it with me, which were you to refuſe, I muſt be convinced you have no friendſhip for me. I love you well enough to ſhare your poſſeſſions, if you were the perſon favoured by fortune. Conſider theſe ſentiments give me a title to ſucceſs, and wound me not by letting me perceive you have not the ſame degree of confidence in me."

Julia

Julia was filled with aſtoniſhment at this offer. The behaviour of thoſe who had called themſelves her friends, could not but make her think it ſtrange to find one ſo very different. Tho' the love ſhe had for Cornelia removed great part of the uneaſineſs perſons are apt to feel, who after a long independency are obliged to accept of favours; yet ſhe could not immediately get over all ſcruples. But the manner Cornelia inſiſted on it, in a little time bent Julia's reſolutions, and ſhe complied, tho' ſhe could never be brought to receive more than a ſmall part of what her friend offered; and ſhe abſolutely refuſed to take more than what would maintain her in the way of life ſhe was ſettled in.

As they were alike generous, this made a great ſtruggle between them, and Cornelia was at laſt obliged to yield a ſeeming obedience, but reſolved that Julia ſhould receive the aſſiſtance ſhe was determined to give her in another way. Cornelia, from time to time, made her preſents of all the things ſhe thought might be uſeful in her houſe or for her perſon. Julia endeavoured to moderate Cornelia's generoſity; till convinced by frequent trials of the impoſſibility of ſucceeding, ſhe was forced to give it up, and acquieſce in accepting of a much better income than ſhe had enjoyed for many years paſt. This put her much at her eaſe, and having at length found ſo true a friend, ſhe enjoyed a ſatisfaction of mind ſhe had never before known. She acknowledged ſhe had never lived ſo happily, and that dependence, which ſhe had ſo carefully avoided, was become a pleaſure by the delicacy of Cornelia's manner.

Julia having thus recovered her ſpirits again, became a very agreeable companion; and they

all

all enjoyed their happineſs ſome time longer, till it began to be troubled by the ſame power that had hitherto been the author of their felicity, love, but in a different object. Henrietta's paſſion was ſtrengthned by the long enjoyment ſhe had now had of Bernardo's converſation; and Madame De La Roche was continually ſoliciting him to reward that conſtant affection, and repreſenting to him the great advantages he would find by adding ſo large a fortune to his own. But all ſhe could ſay had little effect on a heart ſo well defended. She applied to Cornelia, and deſired her to try whether her arguments could not prevail on him, having a great opinion of her underſtanding, and of her eloquence, which would enable her to ſee and ſet forth all advantages in the faireſt and ſtrongeſt light. Love had ſo much power over Henrietta, as to make her humbly beg Cornelia's aſſiſtance, to engage Lucinda to uſe her influence on Bernardo, in Henrietta's behalf.

Cornelia could not have undergone a more diſagreeable ſcene. The ſincerity of her temper made it very painful to her to conceal a truth, and ſuffer them to go on in deceiving themſelves, and putting their confidence in her who was the chief cauſe of their diſappointment. She pitied Henrietta, whoſe paſſion was very violent, and feared the conſequence of her reſentment, when ſhe found how unavailing all endeavours in her favour would prove.

Henrietta's love was not of the ſoft ſort that bears ſcorn without complaint: ſhe was more likely to revenge even the leaſt neglect. The mind wherein love and vanity are joined is in a very turbulent ſtate, and makes a woman more fit

fit to inſpire terror than affection. After ſo open an explanation on her ſide, the very ſight of her became a torment to Bernardo. Every look either intreated a return of kindneſs, or reproached him for his indifference. He was inceſſantly beſet by Madame De La Roche, who was always repeating her unſucceſsful arguments and ſolicitations. He told her frankly, that he did not love Henrietta, that he eſteemed her, and had great gratitude for the honour ſhe did him, but that they had been bred up ſo much in the manner of brother and ſiſter, that he could never look upon her in any other light. He begged that he might always live with her in the ſame way, and that ſhe would pity his misfortune, in being by ſuch a prejudice prevented from enjoying the happineſs that would have attended an union with her, if her charms had made the ſame impreſſion on him that they muſt make on any other man. He added, that he hoped he deſerved her compaſſion the more for having with candour owned the truth, without ſuffering any mercenary views to prevail on him to do her the injury of depriving her of ſome other, who would do more juſtice to her charms than his unfortunate diſpoſition would ſuffer him to do, and not letting her be united to one who ſo ill deſerved her.

Theſe anſwers were not ſufficient to deliver him from Madame De La Roche's importunities. She aſſured him, the prejudice he mentioned would ſoon be removed after marriage; and that his love would then be the greater on account of his former inſenſibility. But finding that intreaties prevailed little, ſhe tried whether threats might not be more powerful. She frequently hinted to him, that ſhe was not obliged to ſupply

him with money any longer than his obedience deſerved it.

He often conſulted his four companions about the means of putting an end to this torment. After all other means had proved in vain, they were reduced to adviſe him to try whether abſence would not a little cool Henrietta's paſſion. He could not reſolve to comply immediately with this propoſal. To leave his Cornelia, with whom he now enjoyed ſo many happy hours, was no eaſy matter. Their love had increaſed with their acquaintance. To ſee her hourly was become neceſſary to him; and after having enjoyed ſo much of her converſation, he could ſcarce believe he could live without it. How would he be able to bear the morning hours, which now paſſed ſo happily in her company, when he ſhould have nothing to fill them but recollection, and the regret that attends it, when it brings to our mind paſt pleaſures, without any certainty of their return! It was not without frequent ſtruggles with himſelf, that he could be brought to reſolve on leaving her for a moment. But at length the neceſſity of his departure became ſo urgent, that he could no longer reſiſt. He wrote to his uncle, to beg he would inſiſt on his coming to him, and in the mean time conſulted with his friends about the means of returning from time to time amongſt them. The manner in which a conſtant correſpondence of letters between him and Cornelia might be carried on, was alſo ſettled. Their remaining time paſſed in vows of conſtancy, and aſſurances of the moſt tender affection. They continually lamented the cruel neceſſity that ſeparated them, and could not enjoy perfectly the few remaining

hours

hours without their being interrupted by thinking how ſoon they muſt be over.

When his uncle's letter came, he ſhewed it to Madame De La Roche, and prepared to obey the ſummons. She could not help ſuſpecting this had been brought by his deſire, but he had too good a plea for his departure for her to contradict it. She ſmothered her anger; but Henrietta was not ſo much miſtreſs of her reſentment. It appeared in ſo inſolent a manner, as might have cured love, if there had been any towards her in Bernardo's heart. The night before he left the place he ſpent in Lucinda's room, where Cornelia and he appeared in as much grief as if they had been parting for ever; nor could they be made eaſy by the aſſurances that Julia had given him, of receiving him at her houſe in women's cloaths, which the fairneſs of his complexion, his youth, and the delicacy of his features, made a very convenient diſguiſe. None of them preferred ſleep to each other's company, nor did they part till they were informed that Henrietta was coming to them. Julia and Cornelia then left the brother and ſiſter together. Henrietta came in with great concern in her countenance: the nearneſs of Bernardo's departure had driven away her reſentment; and ſhe now felt nothing but the pain of loſing the ſight of him. She enquired when ſhe might hope for his return, but received no comfortable anſwer to her queſtion. The expreſſions of her concern for his leaving them gave him ſo little pleaſure, and put him under ſuch difficulties to make proper anſwers, that he took his leave as ſoon as he had made his compliments to Madame De La Roche. It had been agreed between them, that Cornelia ſhould not be pre-

ſent, leſt their grief putting them off their guard, might give room for ſuſpicion. Fortunately for her, Henrietta, who apprehended that he went away rather to avoid her than to ſee his uncle, was ſo much afflicted that ſhe was taken ill, and Madame De La Roche never left her room for two days. By this accident Cornelia had time to recover the languor which grief had ſpread over her countenance, before ſhe was expoſed to their obſervation.

Bernardo's abſence was but too ſenſibly felt by Cornelia; and the kind endeavours of her remaining friends did but ill ſucceed. They ſoon found that even their converſation was ſlighted, and ſolitude preferred to it. But in about a fortnight a letter came that did what they could not do: ſhe had been extremely uneaſy at not having heard from Bernardo. This letter, filled with the tendereſt aſſurances of his love, the kindeſt care for her, and the ſtrongeſt profeſſions of fidelity, revived her. He informed her, that after having left her with the utmoſt regret, and travelled on without reflecting where he was to go, inſenſible to every thing around him, his thoughts were not drawn off from her till he found himſelf benighted in a foreſt. His ſervant, being unacquainted with the country, was of no uſe to hima s a guide: that they wandered for ſome time, till at laſt they perceived a houſe not far from them. A ſtorm to which they had been expoſed about half an hour, and which threatened a much longer continuance, obliged them to beg for ſhelter: that he was received by the lady of the houſe, her ſiſter and daughter, with all imaginable civility, and provided with all things that could contribute to his refreſhment. But that he was ſoon

taken

taken extremely ill, fell into a fever, and continued delirious for ſeveral days. He aſſured Cornelia that nothing elſe ſhould have prevented his writing to her: that his love was too powerful to have ſubmitted to bodily diſorders, and that the only thing that could abate its appearances for the ſhorteſt time, was the loſs of all ſenſe, which whilſt he poſſeſſed muſt be always filled with her image. He told her, he was ſo well recovered that he did not doubt being able to ſet out for his uncle's houſe in a very few days, as he ſhould be ſupported in his journey by the joyful hopes of finding a letter from her, the only comfort abſence would allow him in exchange for thoſe many hours of perfect happineſs he had enjoyed, before this cruel ſeparation was made neceſſary. He concluded, by deſiring her to direct her anſwer to his uncle's houſe, and begged ſhe would prevail upon Julia to let him come to her in the manner they had projected, the day after he ſhould get to his uncle's; as he ſhould then have paid his reſpects to him, and might for a little time ſuſpend the painful abſence, to which they had decreed him. Many more paſſionate aſſurances of this kind forced themſelves from his pen, before he could prevail on himſelf to bid her adieu.

The ſhock Cornelia at firſt received upon hearing he had been ſo ill, ſoon gave place to the joy ſhe felt in the hopes of ſeeing him in ſo ſhort a time. She immediately obtained Julia's conſent to receive him in his female habit, as a relation of her own. She then anſwered his letter with the ſame truth and ſincerity with which ſhe had returned his love. If her expreſſions were leſs ſtrong than his, they were not leſs tender. They were ſuch as muſt make abſence pleaſant at the

firſt moment of their being received, by a heart truly ſenſible of the worth of the affection they expreſſed. A tenderneſs, that in a great meaſure would have been ſuppreſſed in the preſence of the perſon beloved, ſhone forth without reſerve in her letter. She let him know Julia's readineſs to receive him, but begged he would not undertake a journey beyond his ſtrength; and that in the certainty of his love, ſhe would patiently wait for the happineſs of ſeeing him, till he was perfectly recovered.

Cornelia now began a ain to enjoy her uſual ſpirits, reliſh all the pleaſures of her ſituation, and the more pleaſing expectation of ſeeing Bernardo. Not hearing again from him, made her hope that every day would bring this wiſhed-for viſitor: but frequent diſappointments ſoon gave her more pain than expectation did pleaſure. He neither came nor wrote. To what could ſhe attribute this? Was it ſickneſs or indifference that occaſioned it? Every ſuppoſition brought miſery along with it. Sometimes ſhe feared ſome misfortune had happened to him; and ſometimes that the greateſt had befallen her: in other words, that he was become inconſtant. But this fear came but ſeldom, and never laſted long. The confidence ſhe had in him, built on the long trial thro' which his love had paſſed unhurt, preſerved her from giving way to jealouſy. Yet ſhe was almoſt reduced to wiſh it, believing that nothing but the moſt violent diſtemper, or worſe accident, could make him neglect her. Thus tormented by her own thoughts, ſhe paid dearly for the little eaſe his letter had given her. She knew not where to ſend any one to inquire after him; he not having mentioned the name of the place he

was

was at when he wrote. Tho' her uneaſineſs was much the greateſt, yet her friends, Lucinda, Julia, and Du Pré, felt a great deal. Lucinda's love of her brother increaſed her anxiety above what the reſt felt. Julia's gratitude and love fixed her concern chiefly on Cornelia. Du Pré was uneaſy for both, but much leſs than the other two, nature having given him a heart of a leſs ſenſible mould. Bernardo had written to Madame De La Roche at the ſame time he did to Cornelia, and from what he ſaid of the place he was at, and the knowledge ſhe had of the country, ſhe gueſſed where he was when he had wrote. But as he had declared his intention of going to his uncle, ſhe was ſurprized to find by a letter from him, that he had been diſappointed in his expectation of ſeeing his nephew, and had heard nothing of him for ſome time.

Henrietta's paſſion raiſed many fears in her on this occaſion; but ſhe ſoon found a more dreadful tormentor than ever. Her ſervant, by ſome things ſhe had overheard Cornelia ſay, had conceived ſuſpicions of her love for Bernardo: ſhe communicated the diſcovery to her miſtreſs. Jealouſy is eaſily raiſed in a ſlighted lover. She now began to ſuſpect the fondneſs he had ſhewn for Lucinda. His frequent viſits and long ſtay in her apartment, his great chearfulneſs and uncommon ſpirits, and every other thing which ſhe had once viewed in a pleaſing and flattering light, now ſerved to heighten the rage of her jealouſy. The pain this gave her greatly exceeded what ſhe felt from the uncertainty about his welfare. For it hurt one of her vain and violent temper more, to believe that another was preferred to her, than that death had taken from him all power of choice.

Either way ſhe was diſappointed of her hopes of poſſeſſing him; but by the one, every woman that loved him was reduced into the ſame melancholy ſtate; by the other, her ſufferings would be increaſed by the happineſs of a rival.

In this turbulent and painful ſtate of mind, ſhe determined by ſome ſtratagem to be convinced of the truth of her fears. When jealouſy once gains admittance, it is with difficulty kept within any bounds. To ſatisfy this reſtleſs paſſion, ſhe reſolved to go to ſome place near the foreſt, and if ſhe learned he was ſtill in that neighbourhood, to try by a letter in a forged hand, as like Cornelia's as ſhe could make it, to find out if ſhe really was the beloved miſtreſs. Madame De La Roche, to whom ſhe communicated her intention, endeavoured to perſuade her to lay it aſide, by ſhewing her how probable it was that he had left the foreſt, and how improbable it was that any forged hand ſhould paſs upon him for her ſuppoſed rival's. But what perſuaſions can conquer love quickened by jealouſy!

Henrietta would not give up her point; and left her mother on pretence of making a viſit to a relation who lived at a conſiderable diſtance. She went to a houſe near Madame Garre's, and found this to be the place where Bernardo had taken ſhelter, and ſtill remained. She heard nothing to make her doubt of his good ſtate of health. She then ſent him a letter ſhe had prepared in the following terms.

'IF you ever loved one, whoſe conſtant affection may give her ſome right to claim a return, and who from your vows may beal-

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'lowed to put ſome truſt in your conſtancy, you 'will immediately try to relieve by your pre- 'ſence, the diſtreſs of her who is too much op- 'preſſed by ſudden misfortunes, and too ill in 'health to ſay more in this trembling hand, 'than that as you alone can comfort her, ſhe is 'come to the inn in a village called——, in 'hopes by the nearneſs of it to be immediately 'bleſſed with a viſit from you."

Henrietta gave her meſſenger orders not to deliver this letter into any one's hands but Bernardo's. Her ſtratagem had the deſired effect. He immediately ſuppoſed it came from Cornelia; and it filled him with the utmoſt grief and ſurprize. The company he was in when he received the letter, prevented his flying to her with the ſpeed he would otherwiſe have uſed. But he diſpatched the meſſenger immediately, to inform her, that he would follow as ſoon as poſſible.

Henrietta now thought with pleaſure on the diſappointment the ſight of her would give him. It gave her great joy to think of the pain, with which ſhe ſhould puniſh his inſenſibility. When he appeared, the pleaſure which ſhe expected to reap from it was but too complete. He flew into the room with the utmoſt impatience; but the ſight of her fixed him like a ſtatue: he could neither advance nor retire. She enjoyed his diſappointment ſome time; and then began to upbraid him for his ingratitude, in being ſo frighted by her preſence, when he had been ſo impatient to ſee one who did not deſerve his love ſo well. There were no ſort of reproaches, with which her rage did not load him. His aſtoniſhment would have made him inſenſible to all, even tho'

they had come from one for whom he had had a greater regard. But ſhe ſoon diſcovered that her words could hurt him, if applied to detract from Cornelia. Henrietta told him, ſhe found the cauſe of his indifference; that his ſoul was too mean to be captivated by any charms that were not to be found in a low ſtate; that he loved eaſy pleaſures, and whilſt he had his convenient Cornelia, he would buy no other woman at ſo dear a price as that of his liberty.

Nothing but the defence of Cornelia could have forced an anſwer from him. He ſaid her perfections would enoble any birth, whilſt this boaſted advantage could not, in his opinion, hide the ſmalleſt defect: that he ſhould find more pride in being poſſeſſed of Cornelia, than in being the huſband of an empreſs: and as for happineſs, no other woman could give it him, now that he knew what perfection could be included in a female form: that he might have been more eaſily pleaſed before he had ſeen her, but that comparing others with her ſerved only to convince him how little they deſerved his love. He made his viſit very ſhort, and could not help telling Henrietta, that it was painful to him to find he had reaſon to hate one whom he had always eſteemed and reſpected, altho' he could not love her.

Henrietta left to herſelf, found what cruel companions rage and jealouſy are. Tormented by her own reflexions, it was ſome time before ſhe thought of leaving the place where ſhe was; but at length the fear of being diſcovered, made her return home, determined to make Cornelia ſhare in her miſery.

Madame De La Roche was as much exaſperated as her daughter, tho' not ſo tenderly hurt.

hurt. She would gladly have vented her rage directly on Cornelia. But Henrietta convinced her, that it was neceſſary to the revenge ſhe had intended, that Cornelia ſhould not apprehend her amour with Bernardo was ſuſpected. In order to complete her deſign, ſhe ſhewed openly the grief ſhe felt in her heart, but ſeemed deſirous to conceal the cauſe, and to declare very unwillingly, and but indirectly to Cornelia, that it was occaſioned by a trial ſhe had juſt made of Bernardo's diſpoſition. She told her, that having ſuſpected him of libertiniſm and fickleneſs, ſhe had long been uneaſy at the unconquerable paſſion ſhe had for him; but had always been afraid of any inquiry that might turn her ſuſpicions into a certainty, as ſhe feared herſelf not capable of treating him as he deſerved: but that his late abſence had given her time to ſummon up reſolution enough to venture an inquiry into the truth of her ſuſpicions; and to determine, that if ſhe found him what ſhe apprehended, if ſhe could not expell her love entirely, ſhe would at leaſt get ſo far the better of it, as never more to endeavour an union with ſuch a man: that in conſequence of this reſolution, ſhe had gone near to the place where ſhe ſuſpected him to be; and had inquired into the reaſons of his long ſtay there: that ſhe had been told, the charms of ſome of the neighbouring women made him unwilling to change his place of abode; and that he was careſſed by all, and diſperſed his favours very liberally amongſt them. She added to this all the ſtories her invention could ſuggeſt, to ſhew how gayly he paſſed his time, and how general his gallantries were. She then told Cornelia, that being deſirous of trying the truth of this account of

his diſpoſition ſtill farther, ſhe had written him a letter in a feigned hand, declaring a paſſion for him: that he had flown to her with all the eagerneſs of a lover, and came with all the ornaments of dreſs, and an air of the moſt perfect gallantry and greateſt impatience in his countenance to the place ſhe had appointed. But, added ſhe, "I can no more deſcribe the diſappointment that appeared in him, than the pain I felt at this conviction of his unworthineſs to be beloved, at a time when he appeared moſt lovely. The arts of dreſs, the vivacity that the occaſion and the way of life he led had inſpired him with, added ſuch invincible charms to a form always too pleaſing, that I had ſcarce power enough over the tenderneſs of my heart to reproach him with his irregularities; and it became more difficult by the manner in which he behaved to me. In pleading his excuſe, he addreſſed me with an appearance of more affection than I had ever been bleſſed with from him. He begged me even with tenderneſs not to divulge the follies of his conduct; aſſured me they were nothing but what the fixed eſteem he felt for me might overcome. In ſhort he drove away all my reſentment. It ſoothed my love to obſerve any ſymptoms of the like in him, and I began to flatter myſelf with hopes to which my heart had been long a ſtranger. I began again to be poſſeſſed with all the infatuation of love, when a ſervant brought him a letter; which, by the pleaſure with which he received it, I gueſſed was a ſummons from ſome fair one. He immediately got up to take his leave, and left me touched to the ſoul, with being diſappointed of the hope he had raiſed in me of having inſpired him with ſome tenderneſs. I found the fear of

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my reſentment, and what ſeemed to weigh ſtronger with him, my declaring the manner of his conduct, were his inducements to appear more diſpoſed to reward my conſtant love, and that the ſtrain of gallantry he lived in made it eaſy to him to counterfeit. But how fooliſh am I, to expoſe my weakneſs to you, who have not by love, ever been taught to pity. Happy in a cold inſenſibility, you will deſpiſe me, for not at once baniſhing from my thoughts a man with whom I can hope for no happineſs: one, whom my fortune may in time tempt to make me his property, but that nothing can fix to one object: a wanderer in his love, whom no ties can bind."

The real vexation Henrietta laboured under ſupplied her with tears, to add to the appearance of truth ſhe gave to her ſtory, by all the circumſtances ſhe could invent. Cornelia was thunderſtruck with what ſhe had heard. She knew neither how to doubt, nor how to believe. The good opinion ſhe had of Bernardo would make her, at times, reject the whole ſtory as a malicious fiction: at others, the many circumſtances that concurred to make it credible, helped on the deceit. She was too bad a diſſembler to liſten to Henrietta without the moſt violent emotions. Lucinda could not believe ſo ill of her brother; and in order to clear up the matter, ſhe inquired where he was. Henrietta told her, ſhe wiſhed ſhe had not been weak enough to promiſe him not to tell it to any one; and had he not been called away, ſhe feared ſhe ſhould not have been able to have refuſed to conceal the whole affair, which he was then begging her to do.

Cornelia was under too great anxiety to ſtay long with them. She retired to her bed; where

giving way to her reflexions, ſhe was divided betwixt abſolute deſpair, and ſome glimmering of hope. She had always believed that truth and conſtancy were inherent in Bernardo. This opinion defended him well; but what could ſtand againſt the circumſtances that ſeemed to confirm the truth of what Henrietta told her? In this anxious ſtate of mind ſhe remained for above a fortnight; every day adding to her ſuſpicions by bringing her no news of Bernardo. Her rival ſaw, with pleaſure, the decay of her health and ſpirits, which ſhewed her, at leaſt, to be an equal ſufferer. But Cornelia was more generous in her grief: ſhe pitied Henrietta; and knowing by her own heart what a ſlighted lover muſt endure, felt true compaſſion for her, tho', indeed, ſhe herſelf was much the greater object of pity. The other had never known what it was to be happy: deſpair had been the companion of her love from its birth. But Cornelia had been bleſſed with the aſſurance of mutual love; ſhe had enjoyed the pleaſures of the pureſt tenderneſs; hers was like a fall from heaven; compariſon with the paſt, added a bitterneſs to her grief, that the other could not feel.

Thus ſhe ſuffered for more than a fortnight, when her anxiety was turned into a ſettled deſpair, by a letter Madame De La Roche received from Paris, informing her, that a ſuit was begun againſt Bernardo by Mademoiſelle Garré, on a contract of marriage, which he had given her, and now refuſed to perform. This was notified in too certain a manner to leave the leaſt doubt. Upon hearing this letter read Cornelia fainted away. Lucinda was little leſs affected on finding Bernardo ſo baſe. Henrietta ſaw, with ſome remorſe

morſe and confuſion, that ſhe might have ſpared herſelf the trouble of her contrivance; ſince truth would have done all ſhe could aim at. Her reſentment againſt Bernardo had not made her ſo indifferent to him, as to let her remain unmoved on this occaſion: but anger generally got the better of ſofter paſſions in her ſoul. Cornelia was ſo oppreſſed with ſorrow, that ſhe fell into a ſlow fever. Lucinda and Julia never left her; but could not attempt to adminiſter any comfort to her. They were filled with grief and indignation to find Bernardo ſo void of honour, conſtancy, truth, and gratitude; and that ſo incomparable a woman ſhould be the victim of his baſeneſs.

Altho' Cornelia's mind could not be relieved, yet time and the ſtrength of her conſtitution abated her fever. But ſhe no ſooner recovered, than Madame De La Roche, who had no farther motive to conceal her knowledge of Cornelia's love for Bernardo, and who was not ſatisfied with what this young Lady had already ſuffered, told her, that ſhe was informed of the intrigue that had been carried on, and hinted the moſt infamous ſuſpicions; adding, that a woman of ſuch ſcandalous behaviour was not fit to be about her daughter, and therefore deſired ſhe would leave the houſe. This was not ſo ſevere a ſtroke to Cornelia as it would have been in her happier time. Lucinda's and Julia's company was all that could now make the place tolerable to her. They were with her when Madame De La Roche gave vent to her rage and malice. Lucinda begged her not to deprive her of the moſt agreeable companion, and beſt guide ſhe ever had. She ſaid that till Cornelia had inſtructed her, ſhe had

had but very imperfect notions of virtue; and that ſhe could not but improve by the example of one who had nothing but virtues in her compoſition. She then uſed the moſt earneſt entreaties, uttered in the moſt moving manner, to prevail on her mother to retain Cornelia, but without effect. Madame De La Roche left them abruptly, ſaying ſhe was reſolved, and that it would be a fruitleſs attempt to make any change in her reſolution.

After ſome time ſpent in ſilent tears, Cornelia began to lament her being thus forced to leave Lucinda and Julia. "Am I," ſays ſhe, "to enjoy no pleaſures, but ſuch as muſt in a ſhort time be turned into regret! how happy have love and friendſhip made me for this laſt year! and now, alas! the object of the one has forſaken me, and I am to be driven from all the comfort the other might afford me. I am again involved in miſery, far beyond what I have ever yet felt. The aſperſions thrown on my character, I bear better than what is made their conſequence. You, whoſe good opinions are of moſt importance to me, know my innocence. If others think differently of me, a good conſcience ſhall be my conſolation. Tho' a clear reputation will be always dear to me, yet it was once more neceſſary to me than now, that I am determined to retire entirely from the world." She then aſſured Julia, that no abſence ſhould make her forget her, and hoped ſhe would not let it alter the friendſhip with which ſhe had hitherto been favoured. She begged Julia to continue the obligation ſhe had already conferred on her, by accepting a part of her income, ſaying ſhe looked

looked upon the acceptance as a right which ſhe would not relinquiſh.

Julia and Lucinda were inexpreſſibly moved with the conſideration of parting from Cornelia, at a time when melancholy made her ſo little fit to be left to herſelf: and the laſt thing ſhe ſaid to Julia determined this lady to accompany her. She told Cornelia, ſhe could not conſent to let it be in Madame De La Roche's power to bring ſuch a misfortune on her, as a ſeparation from the trueſt friend ſhe had ever met with: that however grieved ſhe ſhould be to part with Lucinda, ſhe could not think of letting Cornelia live alone in the preſent ſtate of her mind. If ſhe could not relieve her ſufferings, ſhe would at leaſt have the ſatisfaction of attempting it. Cornelia was unwilling to take Julia out of the tranquillity in which ſhe lived, and put it again in fortune's power to involve her in new difficulties. But ſhe was ſo reſolved on being the partner of Cornelia's future fortune, that all oppoſition was to no purpoſe. Poor Lucinda now ſaw herſelf on the point of being deprived of her two friends, and left with a mother and ſiſter who never loved her, and who would make her feel the effects of their malice to Cornelia; as they could not doubt of Lucinda's having been fully acquainted with every thing that related to her amour with Bernardo. The grief and agitation Lucinda felt on this melancholy occaſion could not be pacified. Her affections were very ſtrong, and ſhe was too young to have been broken to the diſappointments, to which thoſe who have lived longer are often accuſtomed. When night drew on, and that ſhe was obliged to appear before her mother, her friends took leave of her. Cornelia went home with

with Julia, but not without making Lucinda promiſe to ſpend as much time with them as ſhe would be permitted to do, during the few days they muſt remain in the village, to complete Cornelia's recovery and enable her to travel.

Madame De La Roche's thoughts were ſo much taken up, that ſhe did not regard Lucinda enough to lay any reſtriction upon her. She ſoon received information, that the contract on which Bernardo was ſued would not be deemed binding; and that a little time would clear him of that affair. Her deſire that he ſhould not be married, as ſhe ſtill hoped he might grow better diſpoſed to her daughter if he remained diſengaged, had ſuſpended the effects of her anger, and prevented her from withdrawing the revenue ſhe allowed him. But ſhe no ſooner heard that the cauſe was going to be decided in his favour, than ſhe determined to let him ſee the conſequence of ſlighting Henrietta. She ſtopped all his uſual remittances; and to prevent his receiving any aſſiſtance from Lucinda, ſhe reſolved to ſend her to a convent, on pretence of finiſhing her education. Accordingly, the day before Cornelia and Julia were to leave the neighbourhood, Madame De La Roche ordered her daughter to prepare herſelf for the convent, to which ſhe intended to carry her the next day.

As much as Lucinda had feared living with ſuch a mother and ſiſter, the ſound of a convent filled her with terror. She was apprehenſive they might intend to force her to take the vows, and that way of life was but ill ſuited to the gaiety of her diſpoſition. Her taſte was mirth, friendſhip, and reading; and ſhe had heard too much of convents to expect any ſuch enjoyments in thoſe

thoſe places. She had a conſiderable ſhare of religion, but not of that ſort which repreſents amuſement as a crime, and which holds it ſinful to read any thing not written on ſome pious ſubject. The improvement of her underſtanding ſhe thought a duty; and that the more it was cultivated, the more capable ſhe would be of paying the proper worſhip to her Maker, and of feeling the gratitude due to him for the many bleſſings beſtowed on her.

She immediately went to Julia's houſe to communicate the order ſhe had received, and the reſolution her mother had taken about Bernardo. She hoped for ſome uſeful advice from her friends, or at leaſt that ſhe ſhould there have the comfort of ſeeing thoſe who would take an unfeigned ſhare in her affliction. She was not diſappointed of the relief ſhe expected. Her friends were ſenſibly touched with this additional vexation. Cornelia deſired her not to afflict herſelf with any apprehenſions of being detained in the convent: that in caſe of ſuch violence, ſhe would be juſtified in taking any honeſt means of avoiding it, and would be ſure of finding a quiet refuge with her. Cornelia added, that nature and fortune had both ſeemed to intend Lucinda as an ornament to the world; but if that intention was to be fruſtrated, and that ſhe muſt be ſecluded from it, ſhe had better enjoy liberty in obſcurity and retirement, than be confined to the rules invented by mad founders, and enforced by peeviſh abbeſſes. Cornelia and Julia both aſſured her, that they would receive her with open arms, and would do all that lay in their power to aſſiſt her eſcape, if what ſhe feared was more immediately to threaten her. They promiſed to ſtay in the village

village till they could learn to what convent Madame De La Roche had carried her; and that if the place was ſolitary enough to ſuit Cornelia's diſpoſition of mind, they would fix as near to Lucinda as poſſible; that they might thereby have opportunities of converſing together, as much as the rules of the houſe would permit.

By theſe aſſurances and promiſes, Lucinda became more eaſy. Cornelia then gave her a direction to Madame Du Maine, from whom ſhe would be ſure of receiving her letters; and Lucinda took leave of her friends with the utmoſt tenderneſs, and received the moſt unfeigned marks of their affection. Next morning Lucinda ſet out with Madame De La Roche; and felt leſs concern in travelling to the convent, than what ſhe had felt upon the firſt news of the threatned journey.

Altho' Bernardo's inconſtancy had determined Cornelia to avoid the ſight of him, yet ſhe was ſtill anxious for his welfare, and could not think without great concern on the difficulties he might be under from Madame De La Roche's cruelty. Deſpair had taken the place of hope, or rather happy certainty, in her heart. But ſhe accuſed human nature, and not Bernardo. She pitied his weakneſſes, and grieved they had been ſo long concealed as to make the misfortune fall heavier on her. She endured her own miſery without murmuring, and would gladly have contributed to his happineſs, tho' he had deſtroyed hers. She retained no ſenſe of pleaſure ſo ſtrongly, as that of being of any ſervice to him, who ſhe believed had one fault given him that he alone might not be perfect in this imperfect ſtate. It was ſuch a fault indeed as muſt make

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her fly him for ever; but could not make her hate him. As he was a man, ſhe thought that ſhe ought to have expected to have found in him, ſome of the weakneſſes incident to the reſt of mankind; and therefore blamed her own inconſiderate hopes with the diſappointment under which ſhe now laboured.

Theſe were her reflections on a point wherein moſt women are implacable. She unburthened her heart to Julia, and begged her to find out ſome means of enabling her to convey money to Bernardo, without his knowing from whence it came. She thought herſelf the laſt perſon he could ſuſpect, as his conſcience muſt ſhew him that there was no one from whom he deſerved leſs conſideration. Julia told Cornelia, ſhe could with eaſe aſſiſt her, having a friend in Paris who might be truſted with any ſum ſhe choſe to remit to Bernardo. This was a great relief to Cornelia's mind. She grieved the leſs for any diſtreſs that threatened him, when ſhe found it in her power to aſſiſt him. It would, perhaps, be commending her too far to ſay, that pride had certainly no ſhare in the ſatisfaction ſhe felt. If one we have loved uſes us ill, we feel perhaps more pleaſure in behaving generouſly to them, from a conſciouſneſs of the ſuperiority it gives us over them: but it would be no diſhonour to her, if we ſuppoſed that ſuch conſiderations had any weight with her.

Cornelia ſtayed, according to the promiſe ſhe had given Lucinda, till Madame De La Roche came home, and till ſhe had got information from one of her ſervants, whoſe attachment to Cornelia got the better of her lady's orders, in what convent Madame De La Roche had depoſited her

her charge. Cornelia and Julia then began their journey, intending to meet Madame Du Maine at the town where ſhe and Cornelia had laſt ſpent a little time together. The expectation of ſeeing this firſt of friends, and greateſt of benefactors, who had given her the power of making Julia's life eaſy, and of ſending relief to Bernardo, gave Cornelia all the pleaſure ſhe was then capable of enjoying. Madame Du Maine was punctual to the time appointed. And ſhe inſiſted on Cornelia's going home with her for ſome time, as ſhe thought this might now be done without any danger. A very little obſervation was ſufficient to ſhew Madame Du Maine that Julia would be an agreeable addition to the company, ſo that ſhe was alſo ſtrongly invited, and with pleaſure complied.

Madame Du Maine's family was increaſed ſince Cornelia left it. Mr. Du Maine, her grandſon, who had begun his travels immediately on being reconciled to her, was returned home, and by his company much enlivened the family. He was more fit to create mirth, than inſpire love or eſteem. He was ſo various and unſtable, that it would have been hard to have ſeen any one quality long enough in him, to form a judgment of the return it deſerved. Mr. Du Maine's perſon was bad, his face was plain, but had an air of ridicule in it that increaſed the drollery of his humour, tho' it wanted no aſſiſtance. He had a conſiderable ſhare of wit, and was good humoured and open in company. He was generally ſaid to have a prodigious ſhare of vivacity; but herein his judges ſpoke rather favourably than accurately. A quickneſs of thought and readineſs of expreſſion, joined with good animal ſpirits, properly

perly conſtitute vivacity, which certainly goes far in rendering a man agreeable. But Mr. Du Maine had rather a quick temper, which made his words and actions ſo far out-run his reflections, that he ſcarce allowed himſelf time to think. He ſeemed governed by a kind of inſtinct; with this difference, that he had all the inattention of that gift, tho' none of its infallibility. Thus without the neceſſary guides either of the human, or the brute creation, he ſeemed governed only by chance, under whoſe blind conduct his wit became often unſeaſonable, ſometimes gave pain to others, and ſometimes ridicule to himſelf. He was ſaid to be diſintereſted, but this quality was more properly a want of thought in him than a virtue. His ſincerity ſeemed rather the love of talking than that of truth. What goodneſs of temper he had, aroſe chiefly from a careleſs and inconſtant mind, that could not think of any one thing long enough to be deeply affected with it. All the other virtues he ſeemed to have, were infected with the ſame taint. Real good qualities can only ariſe in a rational mind, where reaſon confirms and improves what a good natural diſpoſition firſt gave birth to. Tho' Mr. Du Maine was not amiable, yet almoſt every one allowed him to be entertaining, and the contraſt between his character, and the inſincere, inſinuating complaiſance, and deſigning regularity of behaviour of his ſiſter and brother-in-law, was very amuſing. He would often expoſe their diſſimulation with great wit and humour; tho' without any view of leſſening them in Madame Du Maine's favour.

This lady, in whom age had not baniſhed vivacity, was greatly diverted with her grand-ſon. She had long known the true nature of Mr. and Madame

Madame De Limon, and was not ſorry to obſerve the uneaſineſs they felt on being diſcovered and expoſed. The perfect knowledge of them had extinguiſhed all her love for them, which however was ſtill placed on three fine children they had, whoſe education ſhe took upon herſelf, in hopes of making them very different from their parents. As this charge was more a ſerious employment than an amuſement, Mr. Du Maine's company was a great pleaſure to her; eſpecially, as ſhe flattered herſelf that if he would remain with her during her life, he would be ſafe from committing any very imprudent actions, and that before that term was expired, time muſt have made ſuch alterations in him as would render him more fit to be intruſted with the care of himſelf. To make her houſe the more agreeable to him, ſhe invited the company ſhe thought he moſt liked, invented or encouraged ſuch amuſements as might tempt him to ſtay, and winked at the little irregularities ſhe could not cure.

Cornelia was much pleaſed to find her friend ſo happy. Her natural vivacity was not ſo intirely conquered, but that Mr. Du Maine's wit would ſometimes make it break forth for a few minutes. But the conſtant ſpirits he enjoyed, ſo ill agreed with the melancholy that preyed on her mind, that ſhe reſolved not to prolong her ſtay beyond what ſhe had at firſt intended. Madame Du Maine on her part was grieved to find Cornelia had received ſuch diſappointments; and diſapproved of the ſolitude ſhe was going to, as it might fix her melancholy: but ſhe found her choice unalterable. Mr. Du Maine had often heard her mentioned, and found ſhe exceeded deſcription. He was greatly delighted with her;

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and it was obſerved, ſhe was the firſt object that ever made him think. But this effect was of ſhort duration, for tho' it was apparent ſhe had made ſome impreſſion on him, yet abſence effaced it in a ſhort time. Madame Du Maine, finding ſhe muſt part with Cornelia, reſolved not to let her go without freſh marks of her affection. She made a very conſiderable addition to the fortune ſhe had already given her; telling her, ſhe ſhould be ſorry not to make her immediately eaſy in circumſtances; and that ſhe loved her too well to defer any thing by which ſhe could contribute towards her happineſs, till death had taken from herſelf all power of enjoyment.

With a ſincere concern on both ſides, they parted. Cornelia and Julia ſet out for the province where Lucinda was, in hopes of finding ſome place to fix in near her. At night as they were ſitting together in the inn, Cornelia heard a voice, which tho' not new to her, ſhe did not immediately recollect. But looking out of the window, ſaw Mr. De Rhone. He perceived her at the ſame time. Their joy and ſurprize was great. She had always retained the higheſt eſteem for him; and tho' he had got the better of his paſſion, yet he ſtill felt the moſt perfect admiration, and pure affection for her.

After Cornelia and Mr. De Rhone had expreſſed the ſatisfaction they found in ſeeing each other ſo unexpectedly, he inquired where ſhe and her fair friend were going. Her anſwer was, that ſhe ſcarce knew; ſhe was in ſearch of a place of perfect retirement, and hoped to find it in ——. She added, that ſhe was induced to prefer that province to any other, by having a friend placed in a convent in the farther part of

it. Mr. De Rhone told her, he was rejoiced to hear it, and could accommodate her with great eaſe, having a very good houſe at a little diſtance from the convent ſhe mentioned; but ſaid, he could not gueſs what ſhould make her deſirous to ſeclude herſelf from the world, unleſs her regard for the reſt of her ſex had made her unwilling to eclipſe them, and reſolve, as the only means of avoiding it, to ſhut herſelf up from mankind. He politely added, that ſhe would thereby do another act of compaſſion, as ſhe would avoid inſpiring all the men with love who knew her, and thus prevent the unhappineſs reſulting from her cruelty, which was ſo much the greater, as the manner in which ſhe forbid them to love her was ſo charming, that it could not fail of fixing their affections. He owned, ſhe was thus far to be juſtified, that no one could reaſonably expect a more favourable treatment from her, as ſhe was a bleſſing beyond the deſert of any man.

Cornelia was at this time ſo unhappily ſenſible how far ſhe was from the indifference with which Monſieur De Rhone had charged her, and that ſhe retired from mankind for reaſons very contrary to thoſe which he had politely aſſigned, that ſhe could not confine the tears that forced their way. This excited Mr. De Rhone's curioſity and compaſſion, and made him deſirous of knowing what had happened to her, ſince he left France. Cornelia told him, ſhe could not refuſe any thing to one ſhe had been ſo much obliged to; and accordingly related every circumſtance of her misfortunes. She ended with ſaying, that her laſt diſappointment was the reaſon of her reſolution of ſpending her life in ſolitude. "You ſee," ſays ſhe, "that want of charms is what

what has reduced me to it. Had not other women been able to eclipſe me, I might have lived happy and beloved. How much more pleaſing muſt they have been, ſince they could baniſh me out of a heart, which had tried the conſtancy and tenderneſs of my affection. There are qualities that muſt have defended the heart of a man of ſenſe againſt charms that were not much ſuperior to mine. Since I know the greatneſs of his underſtanding, it is my own demerit I muſt accuſe. I am here ſhewing how little I have of that pride by which our ſex are generally governed. I own myſelf ſlighted and forſaken, own that I ſtill love the man who has brought npon me the unhappineſs I at preſent feel; and that I fly from ſociety, becauſe I ought not to ſee the only object my eyes can with pleaſure behold. I can never ceaſe loving him, tho' I think better of myſelf than to imagine, it could ever make me give up any of the dignity our ſex ought to preſerve. I will fly him, and puniſh my heart for its want of ſpirit and reſentment. You ſee I feel more than I have ever inflicted, and have felt it long enough to be perſuaded it is not to be conquered."

Tho' Mr De Rhone had received all the benefit of his endeavours to get the better of his paſſion for her, yet where ſo much eſteem and admiration ſubſiſts, love is ſoon recalled. He would have been glad to have conceived ſome hope; but ſhe added ſo many things that ſerved to diſcourage the riſe of any, as put an end to his, and made him reſolve to repreſs every thought of that kind. The account Cornelia had given of her misfortune had ſo far affected her ſpirits, that Mr. De Rhone's and Julia's endeavours to divert her thoughts from ſuch painful objects, had but little

effect. At length, however, ſhe recovered herſelf ſo far as to deſire Monſieur De Rhone to tell her how his time had paſſed, and where he had been ſince they parted. Julia begged him to anſwer Cornelia circumſtantially, in hopes it might bring ſome relief to her mind. The motive was too good not to have all power over him, and he readily complied.

"When with angelic compaſſion and goodneſs," ſaid he, "you adviſed me to try abſence as a cure for the love you could not return, I left you more enchanted with your charms than ever. In every way I ſaw you ſuperior to all your ſex. I felt that ſuperiority too tenderly, and therefore reſolved to conquer all ſentiments but thoſe I ought to have for you. I was conſcious it was preſumption to love you. You had a right to be eſteemed and admired, and to every ſentiment ſhort of adoration. I was ſure you muſt be the beſt guide in every circumſtance of life, and therefore I followed your advice, and immediately left France, to try what abſence and deſpair could do towards my relief. I went to Italy, and travelled from town to town, without finding any object that could expel you a moment from my mind. Sometimes I recollected the aſtoniſhment your beauty threw me into when I firſt ſaw you; how it was increaſed by your innocence, your unaffected virtue, and your fear. Every action of yours, after you were out of that deteſtable houſe, appeared as freſh to me as if it had that moment happened. The admiration I was filled with as your underſtanding opened on me, your extenſive comprehenſion, your juſtneſs of thought, the quickneſs of your diſcernment, the ſcope of your learning, your ſhyneſs of diſcovering it,

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your wit and vivacity, all had their ſhare in charming me; but nothing fixed my love ſo much as that tranſcendent goodneſs which ſhone forth in every thought and action. Sometimes I reflected on the happineſs I enjoyed in your converſation, and the confidence, eaſe, and friendſhip, with which you treated me. But ſoon would follow the cruel moment when you refuſed my love, and baniſhed me my native country. This brought grief, but never could raiſe reſentment. You had ſet me a hard taſk; I was to conquer my love, yet was ſenſible I could never ceaſe to admire and eſteem you. After my perſon had travelled ſome time, tho' my thoughts never wandered, and had ſcarce left Paris even for a moment, I was told, the carnival was going to begin at Rome. I determined to try what effect that time of mirth would have on my ſpirits, and accordingly travelled to that city.

One of the firſt things that ſtruck my attention there was my landlady's daughter, who ſeemed overwhelmed with the deepeſt melancholy at that time of general rejoicing. Her mother ſeemed much touched with her diſtreſs; and as I took little part of the jollity that was going forwards, I had time to remark the reſemblance between this girl's ſtate of mind and my own. A ſimilitude in miſery makes one naturally inquiſitive after the cauſe, and deſirous to give relief. Many days had not paſſed before I inquired into the reaſon of what I ſaw, of the mother. She told me, that her daughter had been long engaged to marry a young man in their neighbourhood: that the love had been mutual, and their circumſtances pretty equal, till a relation died who

left enough to the young man's father, to ſet them much above her in fortune: that upon this acquiſition his parents inſiſted on his breaking off all engagements with her daughter, as he might now pretend to a more advantageous alliance: that this had almoſt broken the hearts of both the young people; and that for her part, ſhe feared the conſequence of a grief that had already deprived her of all the comfort ſhe had before found in this darling daughter."

"I found," ſaid Mr. De Rhone, "a few hundred pounds would reſtore the equality in which they had been ſo happy, and enable them by a ſpeedy marriage to put an end to all fears of another ſeparation. I had taken care to procure myſelf credit for any ſum of money I ſhould want to draw for; ſo I went to the young man's parents, and having by the offer of a ſum, which by the addition of what the young woman's mother would give her, contented them; I got all their conſents to the match, and ſaw the young couple as happy as the completion of their wiſhes could make them. Tho' this made a great noiſe at Rome, I ſhould not have mentioned it, were it not that I am ſure nothing can appear trifling to you which contributes to the happineſs of others, and that this affair gave riſe to another which I am going to relate.

One day in the midſt of the carnival, I obſerved a woman whom, by her ſhape and air, I gueſſed to be young, ſitting in a very melancholy poſture. The uncommonneſs of this ſight, in ſuch a place, tempted me to go up to her. I told her, I was ſurprized to ſee any one ſo untouched with the mirth all around her; that the diſguiſe ſhe wore was generally uſed to conceal

ceal the face, only to give liberty to the heart to yield itſelf up more freely to pleaſure." "Pleaſure," ſays ſhe, "has nothing to do with my heart, it has long been a wiſhed-for gueſt, but keeps far from it. I wear this dreſs as much to hide my heart as my face; tho' I find that cannot be done from your penetration." I aſked her, who could cruelly inflict ſorrow on one who, if I might judge by her air, might have hoped to have eſcaped it many years? "There is no age," ſaid ſhe, "exempt from misfortunes; if any had that privilege, I might expect to be exempted from grief by my youth, but this only ſerves to make me more unhappy, as it muſt naturally prolong my ſufferings, unleſs my conſtitution be overcome by them, and death, my only wiſh, haſten to my relief."

"I was ſincerely touched," continued Mr. De Rhone, "with the ſituation in which ſhe appeared to be; I aſked her, whether it was in the power of one, who would with his utmoſt endeavours aſſiſt her, to relieve her diſtreſs; and as I was preſſing this offer, an acquaintance came by, and called me by my name. Compaſſion had engaged me too ſtrongly, to ſuffer me to make him any anſwer. But ſhe, looking ſtedfaſtly on me, ſaid, "if you are Mr. De Rhone, perhaps you will have generoſity enough to do me ſome ſervice: at leaſt, if that is beyond your power, I can truſt you with my grief; and your advice may do me good. I have heard ſuch inſtances of your virtues, that I cannot but truſt to whatever you ſay." I begged ſhe would tell me if there was any thing wherein I could be of uſe to her, and aſſured her it would give me great pleaſure. "You little think," ſays ſhe, "that with

the ſmall joy I ſeem to receive in this place, I ſhould have run ſuch hazards in coming here, as you will find I do, when I tell you, I am a probationer at the next convent. As ſome ſort of excuſe for myſelf, I muſt trouble you with a ſhort account of my paſt life."

"I am daughter to a gentleman of a large fortune, who lives near Ravenna; I was bred up at home with great indulgence, till I had the misfortune to loſe my mother. I was then put under the care of an old governeſs, from whom I often ſuffered all that the peeviſhneſs of age could add to a bad temper. But theſe ſmall circumſtances are not worth mentioning; and I ſhall paſs them over, to inform you of the cauſe of the uneaſineſs you have obſerved in me. A young gentleman, who was a neighbour of ours, and younger ſon to one of my father's friends, had been a frequent viſiter to my brother, from the time that we all three were children. At firſt we loved each other as play-fellows; as we grew older our affection ſtrengthened, till at laſt it became as ſtrong as it was mutual. The fear of our parents made us conceal it, but the frequent opportunities we had of ſeeing each other, gave us all the pleaſures that with virtue we could enjoy from a reciprocal tenderneſs. In this ſtate of happineſs we lived till I arrived at my eighteenth year. Lorenzo, my lover, was about five years older than myſelf. We had ſcarce conſidered of the difficulty we ſhould find, in bringing our parents to conſent to an union between us. We were ſo well contented with the frequent opportunities of converſation we enjoyed, and the aſſurances of the true affection we had for each other, that we waited without anxiety for the

time

time when we might hope to be united; and not fearing a ſeparation, we thought little of any thing farther. But the fatal period to our felicity was come. One day when Lorenzo returned home, after having ſpent a week at our houſe, he found his father had been taken ſuddenly ill that morning, and his life was then judged in great danger. The next day ended it, his diſtemper increaſing as faſt as it begun violently. Lorenzo, who loved his father tenderly, was much grieved. His love made him fly to me for relief, as ſoon as decency would permit him to leave the houſe. I could not ſee concern in him without ſharing it, and I had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing that I abated his grief. His father left him a fortune that would have afforded us a competence; which to thoſe that love as we did, is the utmoſt their wiſhes extend to. But we knew that my father, by his age and diſpoſition, was much more ſenſible of the value of money, than of the conſequences of a mutual affection to our happineſs; and that he would not be ſo eaſily contented. This made us defer our expectations of marriage, till he had increaſed his paternal fortune by his induſtry. This often carried him from me, which ſeemed a heavier ſtroke on us than even the defering our hopes of an union. But we did not remain long, without finding there was ſtill much greater evils in ſtore for us.

Lorenzo's elder brother was brought home from his travels, by his father's death. He came to our houſe to pay his reſpects to his father's friend. Unfortunately his taſte bore too much reſemblance to his brother's, and without our ſuſpecting it, he became his rival. The firſt knowledge we had of it, was from my father,

of whom he had aſked me, after that a few viſits had confirmed his ſuddenly-conceived love. His fortune was ſo conſiderable that he met with a very favourable anſwer. My father came immediately to my chamber, and told me, I muſt receive the ſon of his dece ſed friend as one who, in a very ſhort time, was to be my huſband: that it was a match he was happy in, as the merit of my lover and his affection for me, gave the faireſt proſpects of my happineſs; and that he was particulary pleaſed with it, for the regard he ſhould always feel for every branch of his friend's family. Lorenzo being the only object of my thoughts, and I having no ſuſpicions of his brother's love, it is not to be wondered at if I ſuppoſed my father meant Lorenzo. I imagined that friendſhip for the father had prevailed in the ſon's favour; and I received the propoſal with ſuch joy and gratitude, that it greatly ſurprized my father; who told me, he was glad to find his inclination and mine agreed ſo well, and bid me come down to entertain my lover. How great was my aſtoniſhment, when my father leading me up to Lorenzo's brother, gave him my hand, telling him, that love had done his part ſo well, he had left nothing for obedience to do!—The pleaſure this ſpeech gave my new lover was as great almoſt as the pain I felt from my diſappointment, but had not quite ſuch violent conſequences. For my part, I was ſo overcome that I fainted away, but was ſoon brought out of that happy inſenſibility. My father expreſſed his ſurprize at the greatneſs of my paſſion, which in ſo ſhort a time could make me receive his hand with ſuch exceſs of joy. I was not able to make any anſwer to all the tranſports of

love

love and gratitude which my lover uttered. I was incapable of ſupporting the interview, and therefore begged leave to retire. My diſorder being looked upon as the effect of my love, nothing I aſked could be refuſed; but it was with great difficulty I went unaccompanied.

When I was left to myſelf, my tears gave me ſome relief. I reſolved to write a note to Lorenzo, to appoint him to my chamber after the reſt of the family were aſleep. It was conceived in ſuch terms as ſerved ſufficiently to alarm him, tho' he could not thereby gueſs at the occaſion of my trouble. He came in obedience to my ſummons. It is impoſſible to expreſs his different emotions when I told him what had paſſed, and how I had at once been thrown down from exceſs of joy to the moſt cruel deſpair. Some hours paſſed in lamentations on our hard fate; and before we could determine on the way to put an end to this match, day began to appear. All we could a ree upon before we parted, wa', to meet the next night, and conſult, when our minds were a little calmed by reflection; and that to avoid ſeeing either my father, or the husband he was deſirous of giving me, I ſhould feign myſelf too ſick to ſee any one, even in my chamber. This was executed as we had concerted. I kept my bed till night; and when every one elſe in the family was gone to reſt, I, with ſome difficulty, prevailed on my ſervant to leave me, and retire to ſleep.

I then got up and dreſſed myſelf to receive Lorenzo, who came with all the impatience of a lover, anxious for his own and for his miſtreſs's fate. We agreed to declare the truth; and to inform my father of the long affection we had

felt for each other; of my miſtake of the propoſal he made me; and of my reſolution to give my hand to none but him who had ſo long had poſſeſſion of my heart. Lorenzo, on his part, was to give my father an account of his fortune; of his readineſs to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to improve it in any way that ſhould be thought moſt adviſeable; to aſſure my father of the perfect obedience he would pay him, and of the grateful ſenſe he ſhould always retain of my father's goodneſs, in conſenting to his happineſs. We agreed to tell him, how well we could be contented with Lorenzo's ſmall paternal fortune, even tho' it ſhould never be increaſed. We reſolved to add our moſt earneſt intreaties, and to conjure him by his paternal love, and the friendſhip which ſeemed to ſurvive the death of his friend, and extend itſelf to his children, to give his conſent, the only thing wanting to eſtabliſh our felicity.

As the ſucceſs of our intended endeavours was extremely uncertain, our grief and fears were not much abated by our reſolution. We neither of us had ſtrength to hide a deſpondency each wiſhed to conceal from the other. We mingled our ſighs and tears, and in doubt whether we ſhould ever meet again, we were indulging ourſelves in a farewel careſs. His arms were round me, I was weeping in his boſom; both ſenſeleſs with grief, and blinded with tears, we were rouſed by a noiſe, and ſaw my father, his ſword drawn in his hand, and running towards me. The death he threatened was not ſo terrible to me as his anger; ſince I feared from it the loſs of Lorenzo, without whom life would be the heavieſt of misfortunes. Lorenzo put himſelf between me and my father, and received

the blow on his arm. This turned my terror into diſtraction. I grew quite frantick; but Lorenzo tried to appeaſe me, by aſſuring me, the hurt was trifling, and gave him the higheſt pleaſure, as it had ſaved me from danger.

He then began to tell my father the occaſion of our meeting, and ſpoke in the manner we had concerted he ſhould, in caſe this unfortunate diſcovery had not been made. Finding him able to hold ſo long a diſcourſe, my terror began to ſubſide a little. I had preſence of mind enough to bind up his wounded arm while he was ſpeaking; and I found courage to perform my part, in the manner we had agreed. There were no intreaties we did not uſe to bring my father to compliance. We were both upon our knees before him, weeping, and begging with the moſt paſſionate earneſtneſs; but to no effect. We could not even diſarm his countenance of any of the rage painted in it when we beheld him firſt." "As for you," ſays he to Lorenzo, "I would revenge this inſult on my honour with your life, did not your father's image live in you. But I muſt exact from you, that you never appear in my ſight again. In my daughter's, I ſhall take care you never ſhall. For I will inſtantly convey her to a convent, where the rigidneſs of the order ſhall preſerve her honour and mine better than ſhe is diſpoſed to do. I am not to be impoſed upon by a feigned tale. And were it truth, I am in my ſenſes, tho' you are not, and ſhall not let you thus run head-long into miſery. Love is one of the play-things of youth, and caſt away in a maturer age as well as the reſt of its baubles. If ſhe chooſes poverty, ſhe ſhall go where it is a duty to bear it. Where without poſſeſſions ſhe

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can never want, or have the power of bringing diſhonour or a beggarly offspring into my family."

I could not contend with a father in his wrath. Lorenzo cried out, Wound me not, Sir, more by your words than you could have done with your ſword: they are ſharper, and cut me in a more ſenſible part. You can not do your daughter the injuſtice to believe ſhe could ever offend againſt virtue. It would be ſtrange if, being her father, you ſhould know her ſo little; therefore I ſhall leave her former conduct, truth, and the innocence ſo ſtrongly and beautifully imprinted on her countenance, to anſwer that part of your diſcourſe. All I ſhall attempt to ſay, is, to beg you will not confine her in a convent. Why will you rob yourſelf of the beſt of daughters, and make the life you have given her a curſe? If you will take a milder courſe, you ſhall baniſh me to any part of the globe. I will never ſtir from it, nor attempt to ſee my native country, nor what is much dearer to me, your daughter, if you will but let her enjoy that liberty to which all mankind have a right, and which none ſo well deſerves as herſelf.

All he could ſay was to no purpoſe. My father refuſed to mitigate his ſentence on any other terms than my accepting the husband he had choſen for me. This condition raiſed a ſpirit in me I had not hitherto felt. I told him, I would prefer death to the being falſe to my vows, my own heart, and my happineſs; and that if I could not remain in the world but by conſenting to my own miſery, I was ready to retire from it. But as I could never ceaſe loving Lorenzo, I

would not conſent to enter into any ſtate that ſhould make that love a crime.

Lorenzo was diſtracted with the thought of having brought that misfortune on me. I tried to comfort him by aſſuring him, that if I might not be his, all places would be alike to me; and that a cell could not be more ſolitary to me than the moſt crowded palace would be whilſt he was abſent. My father enraged to the utmoſt, and finding our love made us forget his preſence, and that the noiſe in my chamber had raiſed the whole family, ordered his coach to be got ready immediately, and commanded my ſervant to pack up my neceſſary apparel. In the mean time, Lorenzo and I ſnatched one ſhort embrace, vowed endleſs conſtancy, and everlaſting, tho' unſucceſsful love. My father's return obliged Lorenzo to leave the room. But I found he had not gone far off, for I ſaw him in a window near us when I followed my father to the coach, which was but too ſoon ready. We took leave of each other with our eyes. Our tears flowed afreſh, and we were paſt ſpeaking.

In this condition I was led to the coach, and brought to a convent in this city, more dead than alive. The grief I was in produced many tireſom exhortations from moſt, and pity from a few; eſpecially the portreſs of the convent, whoſe kindneſs and converſation have given me all the conſolation I have been capable of receiving. The continual ſorrow with which ſhe ſaw me filled, and the averſion ſhe found I had to being fixed in that place, made her wiſh to know the cauſe of my diſtreſs, and to attempt my relief. She told me one day, that if I would truſt her, I ſhould find that any ſervices that were in her

power

power ſhould follow the confidence. The pleaſure of unburthening my heart made me comply with her deſire, rather than hope that relief could reach me in ſuch a place. I related to her all that had paſſed, and found in her much more compaſſion, than I could have expected from one of a ſociety who ſeem excluded from every thing that can inſpire tenderneſs.

She told me, that tho' ſhe had been bred up there from her infancy, yet ſhe owned her natural diſpoſition was too ſtrong to be conquered by habit: that ſhe had never been able to enjoy happineſs in that way of life; and tho' by never having known the world, ſhe could not regret it, yet the utmoſt ſhe had ever been able to arrive at was an inſipid eaſe: that ſince ſhe who had been nothing better could not like the place, ſhe could eaſily imagine how any one muſt ſuffer in it, who had been torn from the pleaſures of the world, and the moſt darling objects of her affection: that if ſhe could give me any aſſiſtance in delivering me from it, it would give her more pleaſure than ſhe had received ſince her coming into the convent; tho' ſhe ſhould thereby loſe a companion ſhe liked better than any that ſhe had ever ſeen admitted into their houſe.

Tho' I ſaw no means of receiving the benefit that her good will wiſhed to give me, as I could not venture an eſcape by myſelf, for fear of being unable to conceal myſelf, and of being brought back again to worſe uſage, and a blemiſhed character; yet it gave me ſome pleaſure to find there was one ſo intereſted in my fate. You may imagine my gratitude made me overflow with thanks. But I told her, unable as I was to get Lorenzo's aſſiſtance, I could not put her goodneſs

to

to the trial. She ſaid ſhe was ſenſible of that difficulty; but if I thought there was any chance of his coming to the carnival, ſhe would take care to let me out for a day, and receive me in again without being found out.

People in deſpair catch at the ſmalleſt poſſibilities. Tho' the chance of his coming here, the place I was confined to being a ſecret to him, was very ſmall, yet I joyfully accepted her offer. When you came up to me, I had ſat down in deſpair of ſeeing him; and was reflecting on the little grounds I had ever to hope it. Your name encouraged me to make this confeſſion of the ſtate of my unhappy heart. The generoſity with which you united two ſeparated lovers, reached the ears even of thoſe who ſeem dead to the world and buried in oblivion. I flatter myſelf with the hopes, that if in your tour you have come thro' Ravenna, and ſeen Lorenzo, you will inform me of it; and perhaps aſſiſt me in ſending a letter to him, as I have no one elſe in whom I can confide."

"This hiſtory," continued Mr. De Rhone, "filled me with compaſſion. I never liked convents, which ſeemed to me calculated to make numbers really miſerable, and only to hide from the world that they were ſo. I could never ſuppoſe, that God had given us talents to exerciſe many duties neceſſary to the happineſs of the community, and yet had ordained that the ſureſt way for the attainment of ſalvation ſhould be ſhutting ourſelves up from the world, and neglecting all the duties for which we were qualified. My diſlike to the eſtabliſhment of convents is not greater than my pity for numbers, who either by the cruelty of their parents are

forced,

forced, or by the allurements of ſome who pretend to be their friends are inticed or by ignorance and prejudice are tempted, to enter into thoſe houſes. Places from whence, like the realms of death, no one returns; where hope ne'er comes that comes to all, but conſtant regret and repining melancholy dwells in almoſt every heart. With ſuch notions you will eaſily believe I wiſhed to deliver the unhappy lady from her priſon. I told her, if ſhe would write to Lorenzo, I would ſend a perſon with her letter, who ſhould deliver it into his hands, whereever he was to be found; and that I would firſt ſend to Ravenna, as the moſt probable place to meet with, or hear of him. Her joy and her acknowledgements were beyond expreſſion. No condemned criminal, on the point of execution, ever received his pardon with ſuch extaſies. We went into a room, were ſhe got pen and ink, and wrote in the following terms.

'IF Lorenzo be as conſtant as he is dear to me, 'he will partake of the joy with which my 'heart now overflows. In my preſent tranſ-'ports I am ſcarce able to tell you the cauſe of 'them, and yet it is not very complicated. It 'is the reſult of the hope that now is infuſed in-'to my heart, of being once more bleſſed with 'your preſence; and if abſence has not altered 'you, of being united too ſecurely to be ever 'again ſeparated by human power. Who could 'expect me to contain my joy, if they knew the 'deſpair I have been under ſince we parted, of 'ever ſeeing you again! The moſt generous of 'men has undertaken to convey this to you. If 'you love me you will return with the meſſenger,

'and

'and when I can form any probable ſcheme for
'my eſcape, you ſhall know it. I am in a ſtate
'of mind too much above tranquillity to write
'more, even tho' I had time. Oh, Lorenzo!
'what have I ſuffered ſince I ſaw you! and yet,
'how well does hope in this moment repay me!
'Adieu. May health attend you, and a thorough
'belief that, if you pleaſe, I am ever yours.

Having got this letter, I aſſured her, I would ſend it directly, and that I did not mean this ſhould be all I would do for her ſervice. I would aſſiſt her lover in any way that could be contrived for her eſcape; and accompany them, till the ſacred bands had made them inſeparable. She returned me all the thanks that a grateful heart, elated with the moſt pleaſing hope, could inſpire. I begged her to lift up her veil; ſhe readily complied, and ſhewed me a very pretty face, in which all the tenderneſs and ſoftneſs of her ſoul was painted. Her charms, tho' not exquiſite, were very attracting; and a man whoſe heart had not been well guarded could not have beheld them with impunity. She retired to her convent, after we had agreed, that I ſhould inform her by the bride who owed her happineſs to me, of the ſucceſs of our ſcheme.

I continued purſuing the diverſions of the carnival, till my ſervant returned, who told me, that Lorenzo was come with him, and was in my antichamber. I went to him, and finding his curioſity to know how I came to be charged with his miſtreſs's commands, was not quite eaſy to him, I related all that had paſſed between us. Lorenzo was pleaſed with the account I gave him; expreſſed great gratitude for what I had

done

done for them, and for the offer I made of the continuance of my ſervices; but begged his miſtreſs might be immediately informed of his arrival. I carried him to the bride I mentioned, whom he charged with a line, expreſſing the greatneſs of his joy at finding her love the ſame as ever, and circumſtances ſo much more favourable. He begged her to communicate to him what means ſhe had imagined for her eſcape, and aſſured her, that however dangerous they might ſeem, he would execute them with inexpreſſible joy, animated with the hopes of poſſeſſing her, without whom life was the heavieſt misfortune.

The bride ſoon brought us back word, that the lady would meet us the next night at the back gate of the convent. All that was to follow for their ſecurity ſhe left to us; but deſired we would alſo provide for a companion who was determined to ſhare her fortune. Lorenzo was too much elevated to attend to the neceſſary precautions, ſo I took the charge on me, promiſing not to leave them till I ſaw them in a place of ſecurity, and united for life. This I thought a duty. I was the contriver of her eſcape; I knew not Lorenzo's private character, but knew that men in general were not always fit to be truſted on ſuch occaſions. And as I intended to deliver her from ſlavery, I was alſo determined to ſecure her from infamy, and the eternal regret the falſeneſs of a man whom her kindneſs had ſo ſtrongly obliged, might bring upon her. Indeed I ſaw nothing in him to inſpire me with this caution; but knowledge of the particular man ſhould alone preſerve us from the fear we have reaſon to have of mankind in general. What we have ſeen of the

ſpecies

ſpecies muſt direct us, till we are perfectly well acquainted with the individual.

When night came we repaired to the place appointed, with all things neceſſary for the eſcape of the lady and her companion. It was not long before they appeared. The portreſs, who attended our fair nun, joined her endeavours with mine, to prevail on the lovers to defer their careſſes and raptures, till they could with more ſecurity give way to them. The warmth of the Italians is not eaſily repreſſed; however, we at laſt perſuaded them to ſuſpend theirs, and to make what haſte they could to get out of the danger of being ſtopped, before the time that their flight would be known.

We travelled with the utmoſt ſpeed, and, by the favour of the night, with ſafety. I had the care of the portreſs, who was ſenſible, and had a vivacity which even her courſe of life could not deſtroy; though ſhe owned, it had been ſo long obſcured, that, as natural as it ſeemed to her, ſhe thought it had entirely left her. Her age was near forty; her perſon was good, and her face agreeable, although ſhe had never been handſome. I found great entertainment in the converſation of one who had formed a world in her own imagination, not at all like to that into which ſhe was going. When I attempted to rectify her miſtakes, ſhe ſeemed diſappointed on finding the truth ſo different from her notions; but was glad I had informed her, and begged me to adviſe her how to conduct herſelf in a ſtate ſo unlike that ſhe had left. Her ingenuity and quickneſs of apprehenſion pleaſed me much. I conſidered ſhe had embarked in a dependence, without well knowing the objections to which it was liable. I told her, that I would ſend her every half

half year ſuch a ſum as ſhould enable her to live with her friend and her huſband on equal terms, or to leave them, if ſhe choſe it. She ſeemed greatly pleaſed, and very happy in my promiſes; but expreſſed great unwillingneſs to receive an obligation, to which ſhe could never make any return. We had much time for diſcourſe, the lovers being ſo much taken up with each other, that we had none of their converſation.

We did not abate our ſpeed, till we got to the confines of Naples. I aſſiſted at the ceremonials of marriage between the tender couple, and then left them to proceed on their determined courſe, as they were now free from danger.

I thought it would not have been ſafe for me to have returned to Rome. I went to Venice, where the carnival ſtill ſubſiſted, and made the place more lively. There was not a ſenator here, who did not l y aſide his ſolemnity, to partake of the general diverſions: the contraſt between the ſilent formality of their grand council, and this time of mirth, was amuſing. As for the women, they ſeemed more licentious in this city than in any other part of Italy. Here political motives get the better of the point of honour: even nuns are allowed great liberties, and their irregularities are winked at, leſt too great conſtraint ſhould deter them from entering into convents. The Venetians ſeem more concerned to get the expence of daughters off their hands, than to regulate their behaviour. The political inſtitutions of this place would afford any one very agreeable matter of obſervation; but as they were not new to me, I left it, and travelled over the reſt of Italy, Germany, Switzerland, and Spain, in hopes, by a variety of objects, to drive you, lovely Cornelia, out of my heart. I found ſome relief,

relief, but it was chiefly from deſpair, which did what abſence could not have effected.

I attended the principal courts of Europe, and received great civilities at every one. The emperor offered me a conſiderable command in his army. Hoping that the rough trade of war might expel ſofter paſſions, I accepted of it, and had the good fortune to be ſucceſsful, both in his cauſe and in that of chriſtianity. I was commander of the troops that forced a very important place to ſurrender, which gave great pleaſure to the prince I ſerved. I received more from finding, that, by my endeavours, I had a little abated the brutality of my ſoldiers, and taught them, that mercy, generoſity, and humanity, were not incompatible with true courage. I felt great ſatisfaction in reſtraining their immoralities, and in obſerving, that, notwithſtanding the diſcipline under which I kept them, I gained their love.

When I thought myſelf ſufficiently armed to bear your ſight, I determined to return home, deſirous not to loſe the enjoyment of your friendſhip, when I was become capable of being contented with it. I was informed by Madame Miteau, that you were gone to Madame du Maine's. As my firſt deſire was to ſee you, I was going there, when my journey was ſtopped by my ſo happily meeting you."

Cornèlia expreſſed the great ſatisfaction which ſhe received from his account of himſelf, and began to inquire about the place to which ſhe intended to go. But he told her, it was already too late for her health; and as that ſubject might lead them into much diſcourſe, he begged ſhe would conſider the neceſſity of ſome repoſe to her fatigued

fatigued ſpirits. Cornelia complied, and retired to her own chamber with Julia.

Theſe ladies were no ſooner alone, than Julia began to expreſs her wonder, that any woman, whom Mr. De Rhone loved, could remain indifferent to him. Cornelia ſaid, that her heart was too full of her love for Bernardo, to admit any one elſe. The other asked, if his ingratitude would not drive him out, and if Monſieur De Rhone's merit might not introduce him into the place. Cornelia replied, that though Bernardo no longer valued her heart, yet no other ſhould have it: ſhe could never alter; and if ſhe could ever command her affections, ſhe would never ſuffer any other man to have the power of making her ſo unhappy as ſhe now was.

Julia had been ſo charmed with Mr. De Rhone, that ſhe was not ſorry to find her in theſe reſolutions; though ſhe did not perceive the true reaſon of her ſentiments on this occaſion; nor had Cornelia conceived any ſuſpicion from her friend's extraordinary attention to that gentleman, till the haſte Julia was in to ſee him in the morning raiſed her obſervation.

They met at breakfaſt very early, all glad to ſee each other. Mr. De Rhone began the converſation, by telling them, he was now ready to give them all the information he could as to the place about which they had inquired. He had informed them, that he had a houſe near it, with a garden and little park, at their ſervice. Cornelia excuſed herſelf from accepting his offer; and it was at laſt ſettled, that ſhe ſhould take a moſt delightful little houſe, within a quarter of a mile of his, and not much farther from the convent where Lucinda was. He then inſiſted on accompanying them

them in their journey, and helping to fix them with the greater convenience, as he knew the place. After all things were agreed on, they ſet out together. The journey paſſed very agreeably to all, except Cornelia; tho' it was as much ſo to her, as the ſituation of her mind would permit.

The place Monſieur de Rhone carried them to was finely ſituated; its little domain was extremely pretty; the garden was on a bank, covered with a hanging wood, a river running at the bottom of it, with meadows of the fineſt verdure on the other ſide. They were ſo near Mr. De Rhone's park, that it was almoſt the ſame as their own. They got to this place about noon; the reſt of the day was ſpent in viewing it, and putting their little habitation in order.

The next day they went to the convent, where the ſight of them overjoyed Lucinda; and they were no leſs glad at finding her in good health. They told her who had been their conductor; and ſhe gave them an account of the mortifications ſhe had to ſuffer during her journey, from her mother and ſiſter's ill temper, and above all, from their ſcandalous reflexions on Cornelia. The abbeſs hearing that ſome new inhabitants were come into the neighbourhood, and that they were then at her houſe, came to them, and entertained them in the moſt obliging manner. She was much taken with their appearance, and the melancholy obſervable in Cornelia made her hope, ſhe had received ſuch diſappointments in the world as might diſguſt her of it, and induce her to take refuge in her convent. Whether it be from a belief that theſe places are the only ſure road to ſalvation, or from a deſire of having companions in their unnatural ſtate, it is certain,

that all thoſe who are ſhut up in religious houſes, are indefatigable in their endeavours to draw in others. We ſhall charitably ſuppoſe the abbeſs was actuated by the firſt of theſe motives, when ſhe expreſſed ſo great a deſire, and repeated her ſollicitations of ſeeing her new gueſts ſo often. They begged leave to make frequent viſits to Lucinda, which was immediately granted.

After having ſpent the morning there, Julia and Cornelia returned hone. They found Mr. De Rhone had been employed in furniſhing their little habitation, with every thing ſuitable and convenient, out of his own caſtle. He contrived to join eaſe and luxury, and preſerve both without too much deviating from the rural ſimplicity of their cottage. He had removed the ſeats and other ornaments of a garden, out of his own into Cornelia's. The ladies ſcarce knew the places they had left ſo few minutes before. It was impoſſible not to be charmed with Mr. De Rhone's politeneſs and generoſity; but it would have given Julia a much higher degree of ſatisfaction, could ſhe have hoped that her pleaſure had been his principal motive. But convinced that Cornelia was the only perſon he aimed at pleaſing, his attentions filled her with fear, that his heart was leſs altered than he imagined. She found herſelf more intereſted in this, than ſhe could have thought poſſible in the time; not conſidering, that the few days ſhe had enjoyed his company had ſo confirmed the character which ſhe had before admired from Cornelia's account, that love might eaſily be ſuppoſed to have made a very quick progreſs in her heart. She would have been greatly alarmed by the firſt ſymptoms of a paſſion ſhe had always reſolved againſt, and had never yet

given

given way to, if ſhe had not depended on the little hopes ſhe had of a return, for the keeping it within due bounds. She flattered herſelf, that what ſhe felt aroſe only from the eſteem and admiration his uncommon merit deſerved.

Julia was naturally ſincere, above diſſimulation: her looks were ſo expreſſive and open, that an affecting thought no ſooner came into her mind, than it made an alteration in her countenance. This ſoon inſtructed Cornelia in the ſtate of her friend's heart. She ſaw with concern, that ſhe had admitted a turbulent gueſt, and ventured her peace on what had robbed ſo many others of theirs. As ſoon as Mr. De Rhone left them to give orders to ſome of his workmen, Cornelia ſaid to her friend, "I am not ſurprized, my Julia, at the impreſſion Mr. De Rhone has already made on your heart: there can be no indifference which he might not conquer. But reflect on my example. You knew Bernardo's real and apparent virtues, you have frequently admired them, and yet you ſee even this man could fail. Let this deter you from fixing your affections too ſtrongly on any man. Conſider me with my deareſt friends about me, an eaſy fortune, all rural beauties aſſembled round me, in every outward circumſtance moſt fortunate, and yet by a fatal paſſion, in the midſt of all thoſe enjoyments, made to drag a miſerable life. Every thing is robbed of its beauty by the melancholy complexion of my mind. The converſation of my friends, our preſent pleaſure, can only give my heart ſome momentary relief. Painful reflections return the ſtronger for having been a little ſuſpended; and inſtead of thinking how happy I am made by all my bleſſings, I conſider how

much I might be ſo, if another was added to them, and how little they can now contribute to my felicity."

Julia had never felt ſo ſtrongly her own danger. "I am highly obliged," ſays ſhe, "to my watchful and ever kind friend, for her cautions. Indeed I hope you miſtake the ſentiments that muſt follow the knowledge of Mr. De Rhone in every heart, for love. Was he to inſpire me with that paſſion, it muſt deſtroy my happineſs, as he would never return my affection. You could never be ſo effaced from any man's heart, as to leave room for any other object. After knowing your merit ſo well, who can ever hope for a ſhare in his eſteem! I ſhall always paſs unregarded by him. The thought is painful, now that I feel only admiration for him; but it muſt make me unhappy if I loved him. I flatter myſelf that my knowledge of the hopeleſſineſs of ſuch a paſſion will preſerve me from it. But obſerve me, my Cornelia, with a watchful eye, and ſtrengthen me by your wiſe councils."

"How can you apply the word, wiſe, to me, when we are talking on this ſubject," replied Cornelia, "who am a ſtrong example of weakneſs; fit to deter you by my misfortunes, but not to perſuade you by my reaſons, to reſiſt all compliance with love's allurements. I have experienced the pains of it, but am not calm enough to gain the wiſdom experience ſhould give me. Let me alarm your fears if I cannot your reaſon, and let them preſerve you from the dangers that threaten you. Fear is given to us, as to many ſpecies of the weaker animals, for our defence. Let us uſe it as ſuch."

Here

Here Mr. De Rhone joined them, and interrupted Cornelia in the midſt of her ſentence. Julia was in ſo much confuſion at his approach, that ſhe was obliged to leave them. Mr. De Rhone aſked Cornelia many queſtions about her. In anſwer to which, ſhe related to him every thing concerning her, mixing with it the praiſes which Julia well deſerved, and which Cornelia was determined to omit no occaſion of repeating; in hopes, that ſhe might raiſe ſuch ſentiments in his heart, as might ſecure Julia from the pains ſhe had been warning her to avoid.

Mr. De Rhone was happy in ſeeing them ſo well pleaſed, with what he had done towards embelliſhing their little dwelling; and prevailed on them to viſit his caſtle the next day. They were ſurprized with its magnificence, and charmed with the beauty of its ſituation. Mr. De Rhone contrived all the methods he could invent to amuſe his fair neighbours. For tho' deſpair had once baniſhed his love from Cornelia, and ſtill preſerved him from it, yet no one was ever more anxious for the happineſs of a friend, than he was for hers. He had every ſentiment for her that he knew ſhe would admit of; and was ſo happy in her company, that he could not think of leaving this place.

As for Julia, Mr. De Rhone eſteemed and reſpected her, but ſtill it was in a degree ſo much below what he did Cornelia, that he had not even obſerved the ſymptoms of her love for him; which was but too ſtrongly felt by herſelf, and ſuſpected by all that ſaw her. Theſe indeed were few. For as ſhe equally loved ſolitude with her friend, they avoided, as much as they civilly could ſeeing any one but Mr. De Rhone, and Lucinda.

Julia owned to Cornelia, the ſmall benefit ſhe had received from her prudent cautions, and that ſhe was no longer able to defend her heart from Mr. De Rhone, tho' he gave her no encouragement to hope. She confeſſed a want of pride, in harbouring love and deſpair at the ſame time. But ſaid, that tho' her happineſs might depend on a return, yet her affection had a nobler foundation; it being fixed on his virtues and amiable qualifications, with a diſintereſtedneſs he deſerved: that it was nouriſhed by admiration, not by hope; and accompanied by humility, inſtead of being increaſed by vanity. She looked on the ſentiments ſhe had for him, as his due from every one that knew his merit; and could not like him the leſs, for his not having the ſentiments for her ſhe could not pretend to deſerve. Mr. De Rhone ſhewed ſo much conſideration and regard for her, that ſhe was tolerably eaſy, as ſhe had never flattered herſelf with the expectation of any thing more. She feared nothing but his abſence; tho' without reaſon: he was too well pleaſed with his companions to think of leaving them.

Cornelia and Julia ſaw Lucinda almoſt every day; which with the civilities ſhe received from the abbeſs and the whole ſiſterhood, made her time paſs agreeably. But the abbeſs made their meetings leſs pleaſant, by making herſelf too often one of the company. When ſhe was abſent, Bernardo was frequently the ſubject of their converſation. Lucinda could not bear to believe him ſo guilty as he appeared to be, and yet could not blame Cornelia for thinking him ſo. She had not learnt gravity enough in her new ſituation, to prevent her from laughing at her two love-ſick friends. Her heart was free, and too gay to be

eaſily

eaſily fixed, and ſhe could not look on theſe matters in ſo ſenſible a light as the two ſufferers. She had a little coquetry in her diſpoſition, and could better comprehend how a woman ſhould deſire to be beloved and admired by every man, than how ſhe ſhould love one, who either never had loved, or had ceaſed to love her. They knew her friendſhip too well, to take the chearfulneſs of her diſpoſition amiſs. It even ſerved to amuſe them; and ſeeing themſelves ridiculed, would often bring them out of a fit of melancholy. They could not deny, but as ſhe ſometimes ſuffered by the effects love had on their ſpirits, ſhe had a right to recompence herſelf by whatever mirth ſhe could extract from it.

All methods were taken in the convent, to prevail on Lucinda to profeſs at the end of her year of probation; and theſe endeavours were ſtrengthened by Madame De La Roche's orders. But no one was ever leſs inclined to lead the life of a recluſe than Lucinda: ſhe was determined to reſiſt all that ſhould be done for that purpoſe. With this reſolution, and Cornelia's promiſe to get her from thence, if it ſhould prove the only means of preſerving her from being obliged to take the vail, ſhe was pretty eaſy under her confinement. She conſidered, her youth would afford her many years of more lively pleaſures, after the time of her impriſonment was paſt. Cornelia ſupplied her with books, which ſhe contrived to read unknown to the reſt of the ſociety; and thus ſhe continued the ſtudies in which Cornelia had inſtructed her.

Mr. De Rhone never paſſed a day without enjoying ſome of the converſation of the two friends. They lived together almoſt with the

ſame eaſe as if one houſe had contained them. They often read together. At other times, he would aſſiſt them in cultivating their garden, and accompany them to the poor, whom they viſited, and whoſe neceſſities they took a delight in relieving. Other neighbours took up little of their time. Reading employed what was not ſpent in the tribute of ſighs and complaints to their love. Julia's were rather an indulgence of her paſſion, than a painful anguiſh; but Cornelia's were made in bitterneſs of ſoul, and accompanied with floods of tears; altho' ſhe removed the melancholy ſubject from her thoughts as much as poſſible by books, which were great reliefs to her.

Cornelia had choſen the moſt ſparing way of life ſhe could. She allowed herſelf no ſuperfluities; and but a part of what the world calls neceſſaries, tho' ſhe was plentifully provided with what was really ſo. By this regulation of her expences, ſhe could the better afford to contribute to the eaſe of her indigent neighbours, and ſupply Bernardo with as good an income as that his mother had withdrawn from him: and this ſhe did ſo ſecretly, that he could never gueſs from what hand it came. The poor had never experienced ſuch goodneſs before, and were as much ſurprized as delighted with her generoſity, and with that of Mr. De Rhone who imitated her.

There was nothing in which Cornelia was more ſolicitous, than to ſupply the poor with means of reſiſting the oppreſſions of the rich. She found out three young women, ſiſters, who were obliged to gain that ſupport by their labour, which their father had amply provided for them. But unhappily, at his death, he left their fortunes and perſons to the care of a very bad man, who had

had defrauded them out of the whole; and then had left the place, that he might enjoy the fruits of his villany without the trouble of hearing their complaints, and the juſt cenſures of all the neighbourhood. Cornelia was touched with pity for theſe three young women, and ſupplied them with money, to obtain by law, what they had been ſo baſely deprived of by their guardian. For this purpoſe, it was neceſſary to enable them to live at Paris; and Mr. De Rhone recommended their cauſe to ſome of his friends, who gave them all poſſible aſſiſtance, and, at length, obtained complete juſtice for them.

In ſuch actions as theſe Cornelia's time paſſed. She had nothing from without to intrude on her peace of mind. In every circumſtance but one, fortune ſeemed to ſmile upon her; and melancholy by becoming habitual, grew leſs bitter. She had lived in this place about four months, and had, in ſome degree, acquired more eaſe of mind, when a meſſage from Mr. De Rhone raiſed great fears in her, but much greater in Julia. He had been confined to his chamber for a few days with an indiſpoſition, which his phyſician hoped would be ſoon removed. They had viſited him conſtantly in his confinement every day, except the laſt, that Cornelia herſelf happened to be too ill to ſtir out. The meſſage was to let them know, Mr. De Rhone was much worſe, and begged to ſee them. They obeyed the ſummons with great haſte and concern, and found him in a violent fever. His phyſician was then with him, who told them, he thought him in ſome danger, tho' not in a deſperate way. The friendſhip of one, and the love of the other lady, was too tender, to hear of any danger

threatning him, without great grief. They immediately reſolved to lay aſide all thoughts about unneceſſary decorum, and to ſtay and attend him. They nurſed him with great attention, which, as his ſenſes were not affected, gave him much ſatisfaction. They ſcarce ever left his room both at a time, night or day.

But his diſtemper was too ſtrong for their care. They could not prevent his growing ſo much worſe in a few days, that his phyſician declared, he had little hope of his life. This was a dreadful ſentence to both his nurſes: but Julia was almoſt deprived of life by it. She could not bear to be an inſtant out of his room, and yet could not ſupport his ſight. She never cauſed weeping, till a fit of ſtupefaction and ſlumber ſeized her, which gave Cornelia an opportunity of removing her to her bed.

Mr. De Rhone had obſerved theſe ſigns of uncommon grief, and tho' very weak, could not help ſaying to Cornelia, "I have ſeen too much of your goodneſs and friendſhip, to be ſurprized at the kind attendance you have given me, and the concern which appears in you thro' all your endeavours to conceal it. I always expected every thing that is virtuous and amiable from you. But how Julia, who has had ſo little reaſon to have any regard for me, comes to appear thus grieved, aſtoniſhes me. I own that tho' it obliges, yet it hurts me. The ſorrow that others feel was always painful to me, and it is ſo to think I ſhall be the cauſe of it in them, even when I ſhall not be in a condition to perceive it."

"A man leſs amiable, but more vain than you are," anſwered Cornelia, "would have obſerved long ago the cauſe of what now excites your

your wonder. She was always desirous you should continue ignorant of it, but now," continued she, bursting into tears, with the thought of what made that secrecy no longer needful, "it can be no harm to tell you, that you never felt more affection for any woman than she does for you. She had often heard me speak of you with more truth than your modesty would bear. She was charmed with your character from my description, and much more so after she became acquainted with you. I perceived love stealing into her heart from the first knowledge she had of you. She flattered herself she had no sentiments but those of esteem and admiration. But a little time convinced her, that these had given rise to a love, which proved irresistible, tho' she had used her utmost endeavours from the first to defend herself from it. It was a passion towards which, she had never before found the least tendency in her disposition. As her hopes had never been raised by your behaviour, or self-flattery, she contented herself with seeing you, and conversing with you constantly, and with a belief she might gain some share of your esteem. Notwithstanding her endeavours to conceal her affection, she is mistress of so little dissimulation, that it was extremely visible, and I have often wondered how you could avoid seeing it; and sometimes doubted, whether indifference for her did not make you choose to appear ignorant of a passion you could not return."

"I assure you, my dear Cornelia," replied Mr. De Rhone, "I was so far from being sensible of it, that I had not assigned this motive, even for her kind attention to me since my illness; and it grieves me to hear it now. I know

too well what hopeleſs love is, not to pity it extremely. I never deſerved to excite ſo ſtrong an affection, nor never wiſhed it but once. This might well make me ſlow in diſcovering it. I have lately been happy enough to make me wiſh to live; but what you tell me, adds to the fear of death, as it muſt give pain to one, whom I wiſh might feel none on my account. I ſhould have choſen to have known Julia's ſentiments, had I been likely to remain longer in this world. Gratitude, and the pleaſure that muſt ariſe from being beloved, to one who has felt all the deſpair that indifference can inflict, might have given me the power of returning it. I eſteemed Julia for what I had ſeen of her, and ſtill more from what you had often ſaid to me in her praiſe. I might have been ſtill more ſenſible of her worth, had I not always ſeen her with you, who draw off my attention from every thing elſe. Since I can make her no return in the only way that love can be repaid, a reciprocal affection, let me however think of ſhewing my regard and gratitude in the only manner my preſent ſituation permits. I have left my eſtate to you, my firſt love, and ever deareſt friend, charged with a legacy to Julia equal to what her brother has in his hands belonging to her; but now if you conſent to it, my fortune ſhall be divided between you. This I leave to you, whoſe honour I can with more confidence truſt to, than to a thouſand parchments."

This inſtance of Mr. De Rhone's friendſhip entirely overcame the little ſpirits Cornelia had remaining. She had never imagined he would ſhew his affection for her beyond the grave. But as ſoon as ſhe recovered herſelf, ſhe begged leave to bring Julia to him, that he himſelf might

might by friendly expreſſions, and the very great proof of regard he had ſhewn her, bring her out of a ſtupefaction of which ſhe dreaded the effects. Cornelia added, that what he meant to do for Julia had ſome colour of reaſon, as the doing all he could for the future eaſe of a woman, who could not receive it without loſing all her happineſs by loſing him, might be juſtified: but that his intentions for herſelf were unwarrantable. She did not merit ſo much conſideration. He muſt have relations or friends who deſerved it better. He had already conferred more obligations on her, than her gratitude and affection, great as they were, could repay. She begged him therefore to inform her, whom he would chooſe to have ſubſtituted in her place, as ſhe did not know enough of his family and connexions to judge; and ſhe would make it the ſame, as if he had bequeathed that part of his eſtate to them by will. She ſaid, ſhe would readily give up to them an inheritance which could never give her any thing but pain; ſince ſhe could never make any uſe of it, without thinking of the misfortune that procured it her.

Here ſhe was ſtoped by the exceſs of her grief. Mr. De Rhone was greatly affected by it, and told her, that if he had known any one more deſerving than her, ſhe ſhould not have had any thing from him: that what he did was only paying a tribute which was due. And without giving her time to make any anſwer, he deſired her, to bring Julia to his bed-ſide. He knew that her care for her friend would, however difficult the taſk might be, make her aſſume a command over herſelf. He was not miſtaken, ſhe roſe up, and led Julia to him, who was ſcarce ſenſible of her

own

own motions. But the ſight of Mr. De Rhone brought her in ſome degree to herſelf.

"Lovely Julia," ſaid he, "when I ſee my death can touch you, I perceive the value of life. Your friendſhip can give it new charms. But as it is a bleſſing I muſt now give up, I ought not to indulge the thought. I will rather beg you to accept what I have bequeathed you, as a token of my regard, if ſuch droſs as money can ſerve to expreſs the beſt affections of our minds. Inſtead of deſiring you to cheriſh my memory, I beg you to forget me; ſince I perceive the ſoftneſs of your nature will make the remembrance painful. The only proof of affection I would have you ſhew me, is to cultivate your own eaſe of mind, to baniſh all melancholy thoughts; and to conſider, that if I could behold you after I am beyond the verge of this world, I could not enjoy my own ſtate unleſs I ſaw you happy, which will always be a point of conſequence to me whilſt I am living, and if any thing in this world can be ſo, muſt be the ſame after I am dead."

Julia was ſo affected by what he ſaid, that it overcame all her faculties entirely, and ſhe fainted away. This ſight moved Mr. De Rhone ſo much, that they were obliged to carry her out of the room. When ſhe came to herſelf, ſhe was almoſt diſtracted with the tumult of paſſions that aroſe in her mind. She was neither able to keep from him, nor fit to be near him. Love, gratitude, grief and terror, overcame her. In this ſituation ſhe continued for two days. He ſeemed to grow worſe gradually, and when his death was every moment expected, an eruption appeared, which increaſing very much, abated his

fever,

ſever, and in a few days more he was unexpectedly out of danger.

Cornelia had not had either thought or opportunity to tell Julia, that the ſecrets of her heart were diſcovered to Mr. De Rhone. When he was recovering, Cornelia feared to let her know it, leſt ſhe ſhould thereby give pain to her friend's modeſty, and cauſe a confuſion and reſerve which might render her leſs pleaſing to him, whom ſhe wiſhed to pleaſe. The joy theſe two ladies received from this happy change in Mr. De Rhone's health, was as exceſſive as their grief had been. When he was ſo far recovered as to have no other complaint than a remaining weakneſs, they left the houſe, and came only at ſuch times as they thought would be moſt agreeable to him. Theſe hours, indeed, made the greateſt part of the day. For tho' he was extremely weak, he was able ſometimes to converſe, and always to liſten to them, whether they read or talked; either of which they did, as they thought might beſt amuſe him.

Mr. De Rhone had determined to uſe his utmoſt endeavours to return Julia's love; and took all poſſible pains to repreſent her to his mind in the moſt pleaſing light. His thoughts dwelt on her merits, and whenever the ſuperior charms of Cornelia intruded on his mind, and eclipſed her fair companion, he added the pleaſure of being beloved to the lighter ſcale, and conſidered the ſatisfaction of having an opportunity of making happy a woman, who had placed her happineſs in him. One indeed appeared bleſſed with all excellencies, but then ſhe could never be his. The other, tho' leſs bright, yet was moſt worthy of his affection, ſince ſhe had ſenſibility for none

none but him. Here he might promiſe himſelf much happineſs, and might be recompenſed by love, for what he had once ſuffered from it.

Theſe reflections, with Cornelia's endeavours, who ſaw, and aſſiſted his views, as far as ſhe was able, helped to make them in ſome meaſure ſucceſsful. His eſteem for Julia increaſed, and the ſatisfaction he found in knowing himſelf beloved, gave his friendſhip a ſofter turn than uſual. Tho' he could not reaſon himſelf into an ardent and tender paſſion like what he had felt for Cornelia, yet he thought his heart ſo much touched that he might venture to declare his affection for her, without running the riſk of thinking afterwards that he had engaged himſelf to more than he ſhould chooſe to perform.

Thus reſolved, Mr. De Rhone took the firſt opportunity of informing Julia, that if ſhe had not the ſame concern for his happineſs that ſhe had ſhewn for his life, he ſhould be reduced to wiſh himſelf ſick to be an object of her tenderneſs; tho' it would not give him the ſame pleaſure when it proceeded from general humanity, as if it aroſe from a more particular regard.

"Not, my fair Julia," ſaid he, "that I can have any right to hope for a heart, for which mine would be a poor price; but ſuch as it is, it has for ſome time been yours, and can never be happy unleſs your generoſity, not my merits, determine your return. This I can aſſure you in its behalf, that its firſt ſtudy ſhall be your happineſs, and its guide, your will, in every point but that of its love for you, which cannot be controuled either by yourſelf or me. I can never wiſh for that power over it, unleſs you exerciſe yours cruelly, and yet even then I ſhould deſpair of obtaining

my

my liberty. You might reaſonably have as good grounds for diſliking me, as I have for eſteeming you; but I own I muſt wiſh that in this point, your excellent reaſon may give way to your compaſſion. Let the pleaſure of giving happineſs plead my cauſe, and if my love can incline you in my favour, I may ſecurely ſay, no man can have a more true affection for you, than that which now makes me beg your permiſſion to hope."

If the pleaſure and confuſion Julia at once felt had not ſtruck her dumb, probably he would ſooner have received the conſent, which he could not doubt of gaining. However, he waited no longer than till ſhe had recovered the uſe of ſpeech, to be aſſured, ſhe thought the ſentiments he expreſſed, if they were real, did her the higheſt honour, and that he was the only man from whom ſhe could ever wiſh them ſpoken in ſincerity. Tho' her temper was frank and open, yet ſhe was doubtful whether ſhe had not ſaid too much, and finiſhed the few words ſhe had uttered, with ſuch a bluſh in her countenance, and amiable confuſion in her manner, as greatly improved her charms. She appeared ſo troubled at the diſcovery of what ſhe imagined he did not know, that it gave it all the beauty of novelty to him, and raiſed almoſt as great raptures in him, as if he had before deſpaired of ſucceſs. He knew indeed that ſhe loved him, but never ſaw it in ſo pleaſing a light. He kiſſed her hand with extaſy, and expreſſed his gratitude for her goodneſs in the ſtrongeſt terms. Poor Julia's mind was in too great agitation for her to ſupport the ſcene. She feared if ſhe ſtaid, ſhe ſhould confeſs her

love

love with more ſincerity than might be pleaſing to him, who muſt have been uſed to female arts and diſſimulation. She therefore begged leave to retire, telling him, he had ſurprized her ſo much, that it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould compoſe herſelf a little before ſhe could make him a tolerable companion.

Julia went directly to communicate this unexpected happineſs to her friend, who was ſcarce leſs rejoiced at it than the other. It had long been her great wiſh; and tho' Mr. De Rhone had made no ſecret of his intentions to Cornelia, yet ſhe obſerved a coolneſs in his affection, that made her fear it might never tempt him to marry Julia, as he ſeemed entirely contented with having her in his neighbourhood, and thereby enjoying her converſation and friendſhip. Julia begged Cornelia to accompany her to Mr. De Rhone, as ſhe was too much confounded to liſten to him again, ſo immediately, on the ſame topic. Cornelia, with pleaſure, complied; and the two lovers, overjoyed by their late converſation, had an increaſe of vivacity that equalled what Cornelia had been inſpired with, by hearing of her friend's good fortune. To make them more eaſy together for the future, ſhe told Mr. De Rhone, that Julia had informed her of what had juſt paſſed between them, and that ſhe had not imagined ſhe was now capable of feeling ſo much joy as ſhe had done on this occaſion: that ſhe ſaw two of the moſt deſerving people in the world, and her deareſt friends, going to make each other as bleſſed as mortality would permit. Dead to pleaſure for herſelf, ſhe was glad to find ſhe could yet receive ſo much from the happineſs of thoſe ſhe loved. She told them her thoughts were filled

filled with the delightful proſpect that opened before them: mutual love and correſponding merit promiſed them a life of felicity, the continuation of which would be one of the greateſt objects of her wiſhes.

Mr. De Rhone thanked her, and ſaid that he joined his wiſhes to hers moſt fervently: ſince his happineſs would be too great for him not to deſire its continuance Julia anſwered only with her eyes, which were full of gratitude, joy, and tenderneſs, and expreſſed more than tongue could utter. As this pair were ſo well agreed, and that nothing obſtructed an immediate alliance, they ſoon determined upon a ſpeedy marriage, and ſolemnized it without pomp.

Cornelia paſſed ſome days in the houſe of the new-wedded pair, and then returned to her own. She was not much more abſent from them for this removal, as they ſpent much of their time together, and with Lucinda. Mr. De Rhone's love, inſtead of being leſſened, was increaſed by matrimony. Julia was perfectly happy, and Cornelia preſerved the ſame place in their eſteem ſhe had ever done. Time, and the pleaſure of ſeeing her friends enjoy ſuch true felicity, by degrees brought her to be ſomething eaſier in mind than ſhe had hitherto been; but ſhe ſtill preſerved a fund of melancholy that was unconquerable. Poor Lucinda began to grow very impatient for her freedom. She was teized with continual ſolicitations to take the veil, and received reiterated commands from Madame De La Roche to that purpoſe. But ſhe ſtill poſtponed a compliance which ſhe durſt not abſolutely refuſe, tho' ſhe was determined one way or other to avoid it.

Cornelia

Cornelia, always watchful for the good of others, and enjoying a little calm, introduced a manufacture into this village. She got from a neighbouring town a few underſtanding workmen, bought them all the materials that were neceſſary towards exerciſing their trade, and put as many of the young villagers as could be ſpared from agriculture, prentices to theſe manufacturers. By her encouragement, and that of her friend Mr. De Rhone, who was animated by her example, ſhe had the pleaſure of ſeeing her benevolent ſcheme flouriſh beyond her hopes, and of finding that the poverty of the people was already a little relieved by it. She took as much care of the minds of the poor as of their bodies, exhorting them to honeſty, induſtry, and all other virtues in the ſphere to which fortune had confined them, and trying to make them underſtand how much the exerciſe of them was conducive to their happpineſs. And leſt precept and example ſhould not be ſufficient, ſhe watched them carefully, reprehended ſuch as were bad, and encouraged the good.

Cornelia was taken off from this worthy employment, by the preſſing deſire of Madame De Rhone, to have her company at Paris, where ſhe was obliged to go in order to lie in. Tho' Cornelia was averſe to leave her charming ſituation, which even winter had not robbed of all its beauties, yet ſhe could not bear to be abſent from her friend, at a time when her care and attendance might be of uſe and comfort both to her and Mr. De Rhone, who was full of anxiety for his beloved wife. This conſideration determined Cornelia again to venture into the world. Lucinda, and the poor people in the neighbourhood

were

were ſhocked to hear of her intended departure. The one ſhe calmed by a promiſe of returning, as ſoon as Madame De Rhone was recovered; and made the others eaſy, by ordering all their uſual ſupplies to be paid them by Lucinda.

Cornelia engaged her fellow-travellers to make a viſit to Madame Du Maine in their way to Paris. The firſt ſalutations were ſcarce over, when that lady told her, there was a young woman in the houſe who came to inquire after her, declaring a great deſire of ſeeing her. Cornelia immediately ſent for this young woman, and was ſurprized to find Maria, who had ſo humanely and generouſly aſſiſted her in her eſcape from Mr. De Rhée. Cornelia had ſent her ſeveral ſums of money, from time to time, as tokens of gratitude, and was now very glad to ſee her. She aſked Maria, to what occaſion this pleaſure was owing? At this queſtion Maria wept, and could not immediately make any anſwer. But as ſoon as ſhe was able, ſhe replied, "Madam, I am brought here by diſtreſs. I delivered you once out of a cloſe and dangerous impriſonment: you may, perhaps, free me from a worſe. The purity of your perſon was only in danger, but that of my ſoul is in the greateſt that can be. Indeed it is gone, tho' I hope not irretrievably. You thought yourſelf obliged to me for the one; how much more ſhould I be to you for the other!" Cornelia told her, it would be very great pleaſure to her, to be able to do her any ſervice, and ſhe ſhould find her indefatigable in endeavouring it; ſhe only begged to be informed how it might be done.

Maria began, after thanking her for the readineſs ſhe expreſſed, "When you, Madam, were

were at the Chateau de Rhée, I was one of the principal domeſtics of the family, being daughter to Mr. De Rhée's ſteward. My only buſineſs was that of taking care of my maſter's, and the family linnen. I had been brought up with particular indulgence, had converſed much with Mr. De Rhée, and, I muſt own, conceived a particular liking for him, as ſoon as I was of age to be ſuſceptible of love. He behaved to me with nothing more than the gallantry and freedom, that is uſual with men to women much below them. I ſhould not do myſelf juſtice if I did not tell you, that I took all the methods I could to cure this paſſion, and hid it ſo well from him, that I believe he never ſuſpected it. By avoiding him as much as poſſible, and ſtrengthening myſelf in the principles of virtue, I thought myſelf in ſome degree a conqueror, till you firſt told me your ſituation, and thereby convinced me I had only flattered myſelf into a belief of my indifference. I was ſenſibly touched to find that his extravagant paſſion for any woman had made him act ſo unjuſt a part. The deſire jealouſy gave me of removing you, correſponded with your perſuaſive prayers. I determined to do all you deſired, fancying compaſſion was my only motive. I am, by this confeſſion, taking off from the obligation you think you have to me: but I would not impoſe upon you. I need ſay nothing of my induſtry in providing for your eſcape. The event ſhewed how great my care and application had been. You were no ſooner gone than I returned to my room, as you adviſed, and had got into bed, before Mr. De Rhée knew you were out of his power. When, as I gueſs, he had looked over all the gar-

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dens in vain, he alarmed the houſe. I got up with the reſt, and counterfeited ignorance ſo well, that I was not once ſuſpected.

Mr. De Rhée was under the greateſt perplexity. He told his ſervants, he had met a young lady in his garden, who had eſcaped from her purſuers, and had begged admittance into his houſe: that he had left her only to ſeek for the keys, to let her in without diſturbing his family; and that in the mean time ſhe diſappeared: that he ſuppoſed ſhe had been alarmed by ſome noiſe, which had made her apprehend her purſuers had diſcovered her: that it grieved him to loſe the power of giving aſſiſtance to a perſon in diſtreſs. He then deſired them to ſearch the garden, and all the adjacent places, it being impoſſible ſhe ſhould be far off. With how little ſucceſs they obeyed his commands, you well know. I could not help being alarmed, leſt any thing might have retarded your departure, and occaſion your being overtaken. But the return of our people eaſed my fears. He had himſelf been employed in the ſearch, and when he found all his endeavours fruitleſs, he grew quite frantic. He was convinced that ſome perſon muſt have been privy to your eſcape; and the ſuſpicion fell on thoſe who had been permitted to come near you. The man who went with you not being heard of, and no one knowing, why, nor where he was gone, confirmed theſe ſuſpicions. In his rage, Mr. De Rhée turned off his Valet de Chambre, and chief female ſervant. Had I not been ſenſible of their baſeneſs, I ſhould have been much concerned to have had them ſuffer for any action of mine. But knowing them thoroughly, I could not help thinking it a piece of juſtice, that they ſhould be

puniſhed on your account, after having ſo ſcandalouſly aſſiſted in injuring you.

After ſome time Mr. De Rhée began to grow more compoſed. He was detained by buſineſs at his caſtle, which he bore but impatiently. From this time I muſt date my misfortunes. Want of amuſement, and a deſire to expell you from his thoughts, made him grow particularly attentive to me. My vanity perſuaded me it was the effect of my charms. Vanity had been the foundation of my liking to Mr. De Rhée. He took ſome notice of me, when I could firſt pretend to attract any man's attention. His ſuperior rank made me think myſelf much honoured by it. I valued myſelf for having merit enough to produce this effect; and I loved him for having diſcernment to ſee it. Thro' my vanity he wounded my heart; and by this return and increaſe of attention his conqueſt was confirmed. The more I had been mortified by the little notice he had taken of me for ſome time, the more I now flattered myſelf. However I was determined never to offend againſt the reſtrictions of virtue. He received no more encouragement than what my eyes might, without my leave, give him I durſt not indeed quite diſcourage him, for fear of loſing a conqueſt which I thought did me ſo much honour. I apprehended, that if I deprived him of hope, I ſhould be deprived of my lover. And why, uſed I to ſay to myſelf, ſhould I do what prudence forbids, and virtue does not command! How far may not his love carry him! Many men with ſtrong paſſions have exalted women of a lower birth than myſelf. I indulged myſelf in many chimeras of this kind; and in purſuance of

their

their dictates raiſed his hopes. At the ſame time I kept a ſtrict guard on my own conduct. I gave him all poſſible opportunities of converſing with me, but in ſuch places, and at ſuch times, as I knew muſt ſecure me from any attempts.

Thus we went on for ſome time. But how little do they know human nature, who think they can ſay to paſſion, ſo far ſhalt thou go, and no farther! Who ever would be certain of never being totally conquered by it, muſt ſuppreſs it at the beginning, and never ſuffer themſelves to go on to the confines of evil. Thoſe who ſit often on the brink of a precipice, are more fortunate than prudent, if they eſcape falling down it at one time or other. A perſon, who truly loves virtue, will always fly as far as poſſible, from every thing that is wrong. All the preludes to a bad action are thereby made bad, tho' in themſelves they may appear innocent. You ſee, Madam, I am not inſenſible to the amiableneſs of juſt and good ſentiments, ſince I can remember them ſo exactly. I collected them from ſome of your writings. I wiſh they had made half the impreſſion on me, that they have done on you! But to continue my unhappy ſtory. From ſmall encouragements, Mr. De Rhée, almoſt impereeptibly, advanced to real liberties. His fondneſs ſeemed to increaſe. Intoxicated with vanity and love, I was off my guard. Inſtead of ballancing my paſſion with reaſon, the latter proved too weak to reſiſt, and was expelled together with virtue. Whoever, alas! thinks that vanity will be our guard, miſtakes its nature. A love of virtue and a conſciouſneſs of our dignity will preſerve us. But vanity firſt

leads us into danger, and then renders us incapable of reſiſtance.

Mr. De Rhée and I lived together for ſome time, without my being awaked from the lethargy, into which vanity had thrown me. He continued fond, and grew ſtill more ſo. But my eaſe was firſt diſturbed, by finding that the footing we had been upon could no longer be concealed. That which I did not bluſh at knowing of myſelf, I was aſhamed others ſhould perceive. I grew melancholy and fretful. This rather cooled Mr. De Rhée's fondneſs. I began to repent of what I had done; but more becauſe I ſuffered from it in the public opinion, than becauſe it was wrong; till by chance, in Mr. De Rhée's cloſet, I found ſome papers which I ſaw were written in your hand. This excited my curioſity. I begged leave to read them. He gave them to me very readily; and I retired immediately to peruſe them.

Theſe papers, Madam, ſhewed me to myſelf in my true colours. They were ſhort treatiſes on vanity, pride, virtue, reputation, liberty, conſcience, riches and happineſs. From them I learned how much I had erred; and how far I had hitherto miſtaken the road to happineſs. My heart was touched. I ſaw I had been intoxicated with vanity and falſe pride, and how fatal their conſequences are. I perceived that a fair reputation is of value to perſons of all ranks, ſo far as it is founded on virtue; but that to be extolled for any thing elſe, is never worth our aim. That to be free, it was neceſſary to be good. That the vicious are the greateſt ſlaves, and are ruled by the worſt of tyrants. I felt that to be virtuous was the only way of ſaving us from

from the pains that conſcience can inflict; and of ſecuring to us the ſupreme ſatisfaction which we receive from its applauſe; a pleaſure far ſuperior to all others. From hence I was eaſily led to believe in your maxim, that to be happy it was neceſſary to be good; and that riches alone could never make us ſo; that the pomps and follies they purchaſed, ſerved only to increaſe the ſources from whence moſt of our misfortunes ſpring.

Thus taught by you, madam, I was determined to renounce my paſt miſconduct, and bring my ſentiments to be worthy of ſuch an inſtructor. I told Mr. De Rhée my reſolution, though, I own, not without great difficulty. It is difficult to form the reſolution of renouncing a perſon we have ſet our hearts on, and more ſo ſtill to execute it. He laughed at my ſcruples, as he called them; and tried to perſuade me out of them: but his arguments were very poor, in compariſon of the reaſon with which your little eſſays were filled. I told him, that if my love did not blind me to what was right, and fix me in the purſuit of what was wrong, nothing elſe could have that power over me; and that I thanked God I could now ſo far conquer that paſſion, as to fly him. He ſeemed certain, that my ſentiments proceeded only from the fear I might think I was now in, both for my reputation and life; but that when the danger was over, paſſion would again aſſume its empire. I found my condition ſuſpected, and ſaw that, by leaving the country, I ſhould convince all my neighbours of the truth of the ſuſpicion. I therefore determined to leave it at once for life. Mr. De Rhée gave me as much money as could be neceſſary for me, till I was recovered.

Nothing could perſuade him, but that I ſhould return to him as ſoon as I was well.

My father was the only perſon entirely ignorant of my ſhame. No one choſe to tell him of it, nor could I confeſs it to him, whilſt I was in the houſe with him. I begged his leave to viſit a relation. As I looked very ill, and really was ſo, he hoped the change of air might do me good, and was therefore very well pleaſed with my ſeeming intention. As ſoon as I had left his houſe, I took the road to Paris. During my journey, I wrote to him, to let him know, that, till I was at a diſtance, I had not courage to tell him, how very unworthily I had behaved; that I hoped my repentance might, in ſome meaſure, alleviate my faults. I aſſured him, it was ſo ſincere, that nothing could ever efface it from my mind, nor induce me again to offend; that inſtead of going to a relation, I was going to Paris, to be delivered of my ſhame, though not of my remorſe; that I could never venture to return to him, as the neighbourhood of Mr. De Rhée, who had been my ſeducer, was not proper for a new profeſſor of virtue. I begged his pardon in the humbleſt and ſtrongeſt terms. I aſſured him, that my whole life ſhould paſs in the ſtudy and practice of virtue and contrition; and this, I hoped, might in time attone for my fault.

My father was at firſt much enraged; but he ſoon relented, and at length wrote to me. His anſwer was, that on my future behaviour depended his forgiveneſs; that he might pardon the firſt offence, but never would a ſecond; that if he heard I acted up to my promiſes, he ſhould act like a father; as he could never help thinking like one,

one, and feeling either pain or pleaſure, according as my actions were wrong or right. Some time afterwards, I was ſafely delivered of my melancholy burden. The child, had it not put me in mind of my folly, was ſuch as would have made any one happy. Mr. De Rhée, I know not by what means, diſcovered where I was, and wrote to me to take care of the child; and that he would ſupply me with all that was neceſſary for its ſupport and my own. By other parts of his letter, I found he intended coming to me. I wrote to beg him not to attempt to ſee me, unleſs he was a ſworn enemy to my peace. His anſwer in return to my moſt ſerious and earneſt entreaties, was entirely ludicrous; and he perſevered in his intention. This letter I received a few days ago, and was determined by it, to apply to you for your advice. Oh! finiſh the work you have begun, and inſtruct me how to avoid him, or let your precepts ſo ſtrengthen my virtue, as to enable me to bear the ſight of him with ſafety. But this, alas! would be ſo difficult a task, that I ſhould be very imprudent in venturing it. As for money, I want it not from him. My own hands will ſupply me with a ſufficient maintenance for me and my unhappy child. I want nothing but your advice and protection."

Cornelia felt a moſt ſincere compaſſion for her; ſhe pitied her ſtaggering virtue, and wiſhed to ſupport it. She thought thoſe happieſt who never failed in their duty; but admired thoſe who could return to it, and loved the repentant offender. She told Maria, that if ſhe ſhould think herſelf more ſecure with her, ſhe would receive her and her little infant; and after her ſtay in Paris, which would be very ſhort, carry her into the country,

where ſhe would at leaſt be out of the way of the temptation ſhe feared. Maria was rejoiced with this offer, and expreſſed her gratitude in the moſt ſincere manner. Cornelia, after having told her how very praiſe-worthy ſhe eſteemed her reſolution, tried to compoſe her mind with reſpect to what was paſt, and adviſed her to contemplate the more happy future proſpect which her good diſpoſitions ſeemed to open to her.

Cornelia then returned to Madame Du Maine, who grieved at being ſo long deprived of her company. After a ſtay of two or three days, they went to Paris. Here Cornelia called on Madame Miteau, whom ſhe found, with the reſt of her family, in good health, and her trade very flouriſhing. Cornelia ventured abroad very ſeldom, and avoided appearing to Madame De Rhone's viſitors, who were very numerous, both on her huſband's account and her own; as thoſe who had avoided her in her diſtreſs, had now the aſſurance to court her in her proſperity.

Cornelia had not been long at Paris, before Madame de Rhone was brought to bed of a ſon. As ſoon as ſhe was recovered, Cornelia began to prepare for her return into the country. Madame De Rhone, however unwilling to part with her, would not preſume ſo far on her friendſhip, as to preſs her to ſtay in a place that made her uneaſy; both from a remaining fear of her uncle, and the ſtill more tormenting thought of being near Bernardo, and yet bound by all the ties of prudence, and regard for her own peace of mind, not to ſee him. She had been informed by Madame Du Maine, that he had been with her, and had longed to know where Cornelia was; but that ſhe, filled with indignation at his baſe inconſtancy,

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and not being well enough to give him an anſwer herſelf, had ſent him word, that the lady he asked for, knew him too well to think he deſerved any ſatisfaction in his inquiry; and therefore ſhe, as her friend, muſt alſo refuſe it him; that he had called ſeveral times afterwards, but had as conſtantly been denied admittance.

As Cornelia was ſenſible it would be more difficult for her to refuſe than to avoid ſeeing him, ſhe was much afraid of his finding her out, and wiſhed herſelf ſafe again in her little aſylum, from all the arts of the world and from her own weakneſs. She was apprehenſive leſt a return of affection in him might incline her to forgiveneſs, altho' ſhe was fully ſatisfied, that ſhe could never be happy with a man of a temper ſo unlike her own in ſteadineſs and conſtancy. Full of theſe reflections, as ſhe was one day coming out of Madam De Miteau's houſe, where ſhe had been to take her leave, ſhe felt ſomebody ſeize her arm, and heard the words, "Do I once again ſee you, my Cornelia! can you be falſe and ungrateful! can that form be ſo belied!" Turning her head with ſurprize, ſhe beheld Bernardo, ſo overcome with the adventure, that he was ſcarcely able to ſupport himſelf. "Dare Bernardo, ſays ſhe, utter the words, falſe and ungrateful, which characterize his own actions ſo truly?" Bernardo was not able to pronounce a ſyllable, but caught faſt hold of her gown, finding her diſpoſed to leave him. "Perjured man, cried ſhe, let me go. You triumphed over my indifference, but never ſhall over my reaſon and reſolution!" She exerted more ſtrength than uſual, and eaſily got from him, as her words had given him ſo deep a wound to his heart, that before ſhe had made three ſteps, he fell ſpeechleſs

and motionleſs to the ground. Moved with this ſight, though little more alive herſelf, Cornelia called Madame De Miteau's family to her aſſiſtance. They conveyed him into the houſe, where, uſing all means for his recovery, they brought him to ſhew ſome ſigns of life. After many deep ſighs, he opened his eyes, and looking at Cornelia, ſaid, with difficulty, "Cruel Cornelia, why do you wiſh the death of a man whoſe life depends on your love? Can unalterable love and conſtancy be ſo deſpiſed, by one who once approved them? You made me happy, to gain the power of making me more miſerable. You have ſucceeded effectually, and will ſoon have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing me brought to the grave by my affliction. Nothing has hitherto kept me from ending a life made unhappy by your inconſtancy, but the confidence in you, which I ſtill in ſome degree retained, notwithſtanding all that has paſſed. I ſometimes was revived by a dawn of hope, from thinking how improbable it was, that ſhe who is tender, benevolent, and generous to all others, ſhould be cruel only to him who loves her more than life; whoſe thoughts and wiſhes are all centered in her; who would endure any extremities, rather than forſake her, for whom he could die with joy, if it would promote her happineſs. But now, alas! theſe flattering hopes are vaniſhed: I have ſeen your barbarity; but ſhall not ſee it long, unleſs Providence be as mercileſs as you."

He uttered theſe words with ſuch ſigns of grief and deſpair, that every one around him wept. Cornelia herſelf, though armed with the remembrance of her wrongs, was not able to ſupport the ſight. All ſhe could find power to pronounce, was, "Unjuſt Bernardo, was it not enough to have

have made me miſerable for ſo long a time, but you muſt now charge me with faults to be found only in yourſelf. Had I been guilty, I might have been uneaſy from the reproaches of my own conſcience, but could never have lived that prey to melancholy I have been ever ſince we parted. You complain in feigned terms. Could grief and diſappointment kill, I ſhould not now be expoſed to what my heart at this moment feels." Tears ſtopped her words.

Bernardo's looks expreſſed the aſtoniſhment of his mind. "What means, cried he, my Cornelia! Oh! let me ſtill call you mine; you muſt always be ſo: I can exiſt no longer than while I am yours; in pity then, for one moment, ſuffer me to enjoy the dear deluſion, to believe you ſtill my promiſed, my conſtant love, tender and true as ever. Tell me, my deareſt angel, tell me, why theſe reproaches, theſe tears, theſe charges of inconſtancy, on him whoſe ſoul doats on you?"

"Your many galantries, anſwered Cornelia, you might diſown, as you may imagine I have no proofs of them; but is not your contract with Mademoiſelle de Garré too notorious, for you to think of hiding it from me? Can your never writing to me but once after we parted, be juſtified? Are theſe reproaches injurious, or were your proceedings ſo? How weak muſt your conſtancy be, that was at an end in one ſhort month! how precarious was my happineſs, when placed on ſuch ſhort-lived love! how dearly have I paid for the felicity I did enjoy! how little do we know what is beſt for ourſelves! I prevailed upon you to leave me: your love made you reluctantly comply. We parted with inexpreſſible grief, but with very different reaſon. How inſupportable would mine

have been, had I known that abſence was ſo ſoon to extinguiſh your love, and that I was never more to ſee happineſs! How would it have relieved your concern to have known, that one month would reſtore your temper to its gaiety, and your heart to its freedom; that you would become a general lover to the ſex, and be ſo taken up with your addreſſes to them, and your promiſes of marriage to one in particular, that you ſhould never find a ſpare moment to write to me! Inconſtant man! if I had no other merit to fix your affection, ſurely the ſincerity, the tenderneſs of my love, might have deſerved a longer remembrance."

"My deareſt Cornelia, ſaid Bernardo, you fill me with aſtoniſhment. I don't know myſelf by your account of me. So far was my mind from admitting gaiety, that I have never ſo much as felt eaſe ſince I left you. As for galantries, I never practiſed them; and the contract you hint at, plainly appeared to the world an abſolute deceit. What cleared me from the conſequences, was my proving, beyond all poſſibility of doubt, that my name was obtained by fraud, and that the reſt was added by the lady herſelf. I knew the juſtice of my cauſe, and therefore applied to no friends to ſolicit for me. She had engaged all hers in her behalf, and they were not remiſs in exerting themſelves. But yet truth prevailed, and this bad woman was ſent down to her former habit tion, with the contempt and infamy ſhe deſerved. The printed caſe will juſtify me in what I ſay. In the other charge you bring againſt me, that of not writing to you, I have not ſo ſtrong evidence; but yet truth will in time appear, and you will know that I wrote frequently to you. I informed you of every thing that happened to me. I often aſk-

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ed your advice, but received no anſwers. I ſtill wrote on, being readier to imagine a thouſand other reaſons for your ſilence, than to ſuſpect you of inconſtancy. But this cruel ſuſpicion came at laſt. I wrote to Lucinda, to as little purpoſe. In this perplexity, forbid to go to my mother's, I went to Madame Du Maine; but ſhe would not ſee me, and ſent me meſſages that added to my diſtraction. My mind was on the rack, my conſtitution viſibly decayed; I could not bear the ſhock of my being thus torn from every thought of happineſs. In this ſituation was I till this moment, that I was brought out of it into one more grievous. Speak comfort to me, my Cornelia; ſave me from deſpair, ſave me from death. Let not thoſe lovely eyes be drowned in inceſſant tears: Turn them kindly on me."

"What fate is reſerved for me, cried Cornelia, with too much weakneſs to overcome my folly, and too much ſenſe to be blind to it! Why, Bernardo, will you thus diſtract me! Why will you ſooth my endleſs love with all your former ſoftneſs! Can I believe what you have ſaid! Can I hope there is ſo much happineſs ſtill in ſtore for the wretched Cornelia, as to find your love true and conſtant! Do not flatter me, nor deceive me; leave me rather in the miſery in which you found me. Time had alleviated it in ſome degree: if you can pity one whoſe miſery you have occaſioned, draw me not out of it, to plunge me in it afreſh."

"Wrong me not, anſwered Bernardo, with ſuch ſuſpicions. I am incapable of change. My love has been for ever fixed from the firſt time I ſaw you. What has made me appear guilty in your eyes, is a myſtery I cannot yet unravel. But,

my life, my only joy, promiſe me to liſten to my defence, and that if it be convincing, you will again receive me with the ſweetneſs that made me happy, and grant me that love which was my ſole felicity. Let not a miſtake rob me of a heart I could never with reaſon loſe; ſince the whole ſtudy of my life would be to keep it, and to endeavour to deſerve it."

"Could I refuſe you, if I wiſhed it? ſaid Cornelia; though circumſtances have changed, my affection has not. You have as full poſſeſſion of my heart as ever, tho' my reaſon is not ſo much your friend, as it was in my happier days. I muſt ever wiſh to be convinced of the conſtancy on which my happineſs depends. Grant, heaven, it may ever appear clearly to me, and all my ambition will be anſwered! The moment I find you what you were, you ſhall ſee me the ſame. I cannot conceal my being ſo ſtill, though my pride would make me wiſh to do ſo, till I know that you have ever loved me. The hope you give me of proving it, brings more pleaſure with it, than moſt people can feel from certainty." In pronouncing theſe words, ſhe caſt a look upon him ſo inexpreſſibly tender, as enchanted him. He took her hand, and kiſſing it with rapture, expreſſed his joy and gratitude, and aſſured her of his love in the moſt moving terms.

In this ſituation they remained, till Cornelia recollected, that Madame De Rhone might be anxious for her return. Bernardo begged he might accompany her; but ſhe deſired him only to follow her in an hour, that ſhe might have time to compoſe herſelf. She told him, ſhe ſhould then be glad to hear what he could ſay in his defence; that he had the ſatisfaction of knowing that he had no

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judges to plead before, but what were very partial in his favour; and that if he meant to deceive them, their desire to believe him would do half the work for him. He replied, that he should apply to their justice, and not to their favour, when his love was to be tried; though, in every other point, he must hope in their partiality for their approbation. He thought an hour's absence too much after so long a separation, and begged her to shorten the time, which she with pleasure consented to, as she was impatient to have her love, which she found as strong as ever, assented to by her reason.

When Cornelia got home, she went to Madame De Rhone's apartment, where her husband happened to be. They immediately saw something more than common in Cornelia's countenance, which, with her absence, raised their curiosity, and made them inquire if any thing had disturbed her. Cornelia, after saying she was afraid she should give them a very mean opinion of her sense and resolution, but that she could not conceal from them even her weaknesses, gave them an account of her being met by Bernardo, and how she was prevented from leaving him instantly; of their conveying him into Madam Miteau's house; of his recovering from his swoon, and what he said when he came to himself. She proceeded to give an account of all that had passed afterwards, as well as she could recollect, in the state of confusion her mind had been in, from the first moment of their meeting. She concluded by telling them, she expected he would come in a few minutes, and try to clear himself of all imputations.

Mr. and Madame De Rhone assured her, that she had made an apology for what needed none;

and that it would have been want of juſtice, as well as of affection, to refuſe Bernardo an opportunity of clearing himſelf. They had ſcarce time to expreſs thus much before he appeared. After again giving the moſt affectionate marks of his joy on ſeeing Cornelia, he embraced Madame de Rhone, and congratulated her on her good fortune in being united to a man of ſuch diſtinguiſhed merit. Mr. De Rhone only waited till theſe friends had poured out the joy of their hearts on thus meeting together, to pay his reſpects to Bernardo. His very appearance was enough to clear him from the ſuſpicion of any bad quality. The compliments he had paid Mr. De Rhone, in congratulating his lady, required his acknowledgements, which he expreſſed both with all poſſible politeneſs and regard.

As Bernardo's thoughts were full of his juſtification, he ſoon ſtopt all other converſation. He gave Cornelia a copy of his trial, and told her, that he believed this would be allowed a ſtronger defence, than any thing he could ſay with reſpect to the principal charge againſt him. He then begged, ſhe would inform him of whatever elſe ſhe had to object, that he might defend himſelf. Cornelia then repeated all that Henrietta had told her. Bernardo aſſured her, that all but the circumſtance concerning Henrietta herſelf, was entirely falſe, and ſolely the invention of her infernal malice and jealouſy; and that this circumſtance was only in part true, and in reality ſo very different from the turn ſhe had given it, that it ſhewed her envy and jealouſy in an equally ſtrong light with the reſt of her behaviour. He then related every circumſtance of the affair, and told them Henrietta's letter would prove the truth of

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what he ſaid. He offered to go for this letter, if they were not already convinced; or bring it with him the next day, if they choſe it.

This laſt propoſal was agreed to. As for his behaviour ſince that time, Bernardo told them, that one who was happy in being Mr. De Rhone's friend, could give them an exact account of it, and convince them, that no man could, with leſs juſtice, be charged with a moment's indifference or inconſtancy; and that if they would give him leave, he would introduce his conſtant companion to the friend he ſo greatly eſteemed and longed to ſee; that all ſuſpicions would hereby be cleared up, as no one would doubt the word of Mr. De Vaux. Mr. De Rhone was rejoiced to hear, that this gentleman was in Paris, and expreſſed a great impatience to ſee him. It was agreed, that Bernardo ſhould bring him the next morning early.

It is eaſy to imagine the lovers parted with that happineſs of mind, of which they had been ſo long deprived. If poſſible, their affection was increaſed by what they had ſuffered. They gave up their hearts more abſolutely to joy; and the few hours they had to reflect on this happy change in their ſituations, made ſo great an alteration in their countenances, as well as their ſpirits, that the difference was very obſervable the next day, and did not eſcape Mr. and Madame De Rhone's notice. Nor did the amendment that appeared in Bernardo eſcape Mr. De Vaux. He and Bernardo came to Mr. De Rhone's next morning. De Vaux was introduced to Cornelia, whom he beheld with admiration; and turning to Bernardo, ſaid, with a low voice, "I now ceaſe to blame you. You loved an angel. It is no wonder, no mortal woman could remove her from your heart,

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or divert your thoughts from ſo attracting an object."

Mr. De Rhone entering the room, ſaved her modeſty from the continuation of a half whiſper that had ſpread vermilion over her face. The meeting of the two friends was very affectionate; and their curioſity about all that had happened to each other, gave the delighted lovers an opportunity of giving ſome vent to the tenderneſs of their hearts, in the moſt affectionate endearments. Their converſation paſſed with the incoherence that muſt attend the raptures with which their ſouls were filled. They begged each other pardon, for letting any thing infuſe a moment's doubt into them. Then each thanked the other, in expreſſions of the moſt lively gratitude, for the love that had remained unſhaken in the midſt of ſuch ſtorms of ſuſpicion and deſpair. The recollection of the pains they had ſo long ſuffered, and the ſenſe of their preſent felicity, equally forced the tears from their eyes.

Mr. De Rhone, fearing the agitation of Cornelia's mind might be too much for her ſtrength, endeavoured to make the converſation general. He ſaid, he would have apologized for his want of attention to Bernardo, had he not ſeen him ſo much happier in his fair companion, than any thing elſe could make him. Bernardo owned, he could receive no delight to be compared with Cornelia's converſation; but that if he could wiſh for any thing more, it would be for that of Mr. De Rhone, his lady, and his friend. "Indeed," ſaid Madame de Rhone, "you would be very ungrateful, if you did not make me ſome acknowledgements, for having ſat all this time in the moſt commendable ſilence, for fear of interrupting your converſation

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with Cornelia. I expected you ſhould forget I was one of the company, and I withdrew to ſome diſtance, that I might not be an impertinent liſtner to diſcourſes which did not want any third perſon."

"Julia, you know, is all goodneſs," ſaid Mr. De Rhone; "but you muſt not expect the ſame from me. Many things Bernardo mentioned laſt night were too conciſely related to be underſtood by me. I ſhall therefore feel more uneaſy curioſity, than I dare own, if he will not ſatisfy it by a full and particular relation of every thing that has happened to him ſince he left Madame De La Roche's houſe. I know Cornelia will approve of what I propoſe, as it will make Bernardo the only ſpeaker." All the company joined their requeſts to Mr. De Rhone's, and Bernardo immediately complied.

"When, "ſaid he," I was prevailed on, for reaſons you know, to leave the place where I was bleſſed with my Cornelia's company, my thoughts being filled with her image, I travelled on the whole day, without ever conſidering whether I was in the road that led to my uncle's, and without being ſenſible of the approach of night, which was pretty far advanced, when the coming on of a ſtorm, and the clamours of my ſervant, who was out of patience at having ſo often ſpoken to me, without being able to make himſelf heard, rouſed me out of the reverie I was in. I found that we had loſt our way, and were in a thick wood. We wandered about for ſome time. At laſt my ſervant diſcovered a houſe by the lights burning in it. We went to it, and begged for ſhelter till the ſtorm was over.

We were admitted with great civility. An old lady came to us, and made me walk in with her

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to the room where ſhe had been ſitting with two other ladies. They ordered every thing neceſſary for my refreſhment, and behaved with great politeneſs to me. It was late, and I was ſoon led to a bedchamber. The next morning, being ſomething out of order, the ladies inſiſted ſo much on my ſtaying with them, that I could not refuſe it. Indeed I found myſelf ſo much indiſpoſed, that it would alone have been a ſufficient reaſon for my compliance, had I not been more unwilling to give trouble to ſtrangers, than to run the risk of being ſick at an inn. Before the end of the day I grew very ill; and the next I was confined to my bed with a fever, where I was kept about a fortnight.

The attendance of Mademoiſelle De Garré, on this occaſion, was ſomething beyond aſſiduous; it had an air of tenderneſs, which was alſo obſervable in her aunt. Madame De Garré was very obliging, and viſited me ſeveral times in a day; giving ſtrict orders that I ſhould have every thing I wanted. Her ſiſter was often buſy in preparing things for me. She would ſcarce let me take any thing but from her hands. Had I complied with her care, I muſt have nouriſhed my fever much longer; her great fear ſeeming to be, leſt I ſhould die for want of ſuſtenance. Mademoiſelle, who ſat often by my bed-ſide, uſed to ſpend her time in pitying my diſorder, and lamenting over me. Her attendance was moſt irkſome to me: every thing ſhe did was diſagreeable. Her aunt, by her attentions, was ſometimes uſeful, though oftener troubleſome. Madame De Garré was the only one, whoſe behaviour I liked, though ſhe was the leaſt anxious to pleaſe me.

As my acquaintance with this family had very extra-

extraordinary conſequences, I muſt deſcribe thoſe who compoſed it. Madame De Garré was very near her grand climacteric, if not beyond it; was polite in her manner, and agreeable in her converſation. She doated on her only daughter, and ſaw nothing but with her eyes. She had not ſpirit enough to govern, and was beſides too indolent to examine whether ſhe was ill or well governed.

Madame De Garré's ſiſter was between forty and fifty. She had never been married, which, in all appearance, was not occaſioned by any averſion to the ſtate. She omitted no method of appearing young. But I ought firſt to give you ſome idea of her perſon. She was tall and thin; rather ſtiff in her manner and ſhape. Her hair was of a bad brown, her complexion dark, and without the aſſiſtance of art, would have been entirely void of the roſe, or of any other red. Her cheeks fell in a little, and her eyes were ſomewhat ſunk, but ſtill retained a languiſhing air, which was rather a true repreſentation of the ſtate of her mind, than any improvement of her beauty. Her throat and hands were ſo lean, and the veins and ſinews appeared ſo plainly, that they might have been very uſeful to thoſe who ſtudy anatomy; but, to others, were far from agreeable objects. The chief foundation of her vanity was a ſmall foot, which had been pinched for many years, that it might be kept at what ſhe thought a beautiful ſize. In her converſation ſhe affected a youthfulneſs, that put one more in mind of the diſtance ſhe was removed from it. She had an air of tenderneſs, mixed with all the flirtiſhneſs of coquetry. She pretended to much good nature and compaſſion, but continually hinted how much the men thought her

deficient

deficient in theſe virtues; though, in truth, they ſeemed ſo deeply rivetted in her nature, where our ſex was concerned, that one could not ſuſpect her of ever having been void of them. The chief topicks of her converſation, were the failings of girls, and the ſuperior perfections of women arrived at an age of maturity. However, ſhe approved of, and wore the dreſs of girls, tho' ſhe ſuffered by its coldneſs.

Mademoiſelle was about thirty; ſhe was generally eſteemed a fine woman, but I never could ſee her in any better light than that of a large woman. She had ſome ſpirit in her eyes, which, with a fine complexion, conſtituted all her beauty. This was not improved by the colour of her hair, which was of a fiery red; but her eye-laſhes and her eye-brows were black. Here teeth were fine, but her noſe was very large. No woman ever had a perſon leſs fit to act the tender, yet it was what ſhe failed not to affect. She was inſignificant and tireſome in her converſation, and ſo very obliging, that ſhe could never oblige. Her civility ſeemed a force put upon her by art, and in moſt caſes was ſo; for ſhe had a very violent temper, never accuſtomed to controul, nor ſubjected to any conſtraint. Her aunt and ſhe had frequent quarrels, which indeed ſeldom went beyond hints of the inconſiſtency of gallantry and coquetry with age, on one ſide; and of the impropriety of forwardneſs, and courting of men, on the other. Before the application became plain, Madame De Garré acted the peace-maker, and uſed, with the utmoſt difficulty, to reconcile them. They never clafhed on any ſubject, ſo much as about me. Each was offended at the other's care, and was continually hinting at the indecent regard the

other

other ſhewed. Had they been women, whoſe attention could have flattered me, I might have become vain; but their civility ſeemed to me rather to proceed from affection to our ſex in general, than to me in particular.

Under the care of this family I recovered in about a fortnight; ſo as to be able to write to my Cornelia: but much more time was required to recruit my ſtrength ſufficiently to enable me to take a journey. During this interval, I was expoſed to all the artillery of the eyes of the two maiden ladies, which was always levelled at me, and played off with great ſkill. Their converſation was not leſs kind. It was not indeed quite free from a little acrimony. For with the ſweeteſt expreſſions to myſelf, were mixed the ſevereſt reflexions on each other; particularly, when either of them was abſent. As their aim was to depreciate each other in my opinion, I was ſoon made acquainted with their faults and follies. I was told of the fondneſs they had ſhewn ſeveral men, leſt gratitude ſhould tempt me return what they ſo laviſhly beſtowed on me.

From the aunt I learned, that Mademoiſelle was at fourteen going to run away with her father's Valet de Chambre; but that by her aunt's great penetration the affair had been diſcovered, and was thereby prevented; and that her niece's pride had been hereupon cultivated with ſuch care, that ſhe had never taken ſo low an inclination ſince. That afterwards a marriage was concluded between her and a young gentleman of the ſame province; and that after her cloaths had been bought, and every thing got ready on both ſides, the lover choſe another bride, and married privately a young woman with whom he had been

long

long in love. That the endeavours Madamoiſelle uſed to make his father irreconcileable to him, had ſhewn her in ſuch a light to him, who had before been ſo deſirous of having her for his daughter, that he grew thankful for his ſon's deliverance, and in his joy was ſincerely reconciled to him and the wife he had choſen, who was of a very different character. The unhappineſs the old gentleman found he was ſo near bringing upon his ſon by chooſing for him, had ſo ſtrong an effect on his good nature, that tho' he had before appeared very abſolute in that point, yet he never after would conſtrain the inclination of any of his children, in their marriages; but if their choices were no way ſhameful, approved of them. That Mademoiſelle had ſince tried to attract many others, but without ſucceſs.

From the niece I learned, that her aunt had been ſtill more unfortunate. That ſhe had lived in a convent, where ſhe was put for education, and kept there till ſhe was near thirty, by a mother who was not fond of having her daughters appear with her. That her mother dying, ſhe left the convent, and appeared in the world with a fortune ſufficient to ſupport her with dignity. "The ſplendor of it," ſaid Madamoiſelle, "attracted a young man in deſperate circumſtances, tho' of good birth. He pretended a moſt ardent paſſion for her; and her vanity carried on the deceit ſo well, that he might have ſpared himſelf half his trouble. Her nature being too tender to ſhew cruelty to ſo true a lover, ſhe promiſed to reward his flame. Too generous to expect any fortune with him, ſhe ſettled what was ſufficient on him, and prepared all things neceſſary for the celebration of their nuptials. The gay appearance ſhe intended to

make

make afterwards, and the exceſs of her joy made her the more laviſh in her preparations, which were indeed very ſplendid. She had haſtened them, to ſatisfy both her own and her lover's impatience: certain, by a melancholy obſervable in him for ſome days, that his was ſo great as to be quite painful to him, tho' out of his moſt obſequious ſubmiſſiveneſs, and his great delicacy, he had not declared it. Thus haſtened on, the morning came, when Love was expected to bring the hymeneal torch to guide the love-ſick pair to their happineſs. The bride was dreſſed early, and expected the bridegroom, with all the beauty of an Adonis, and raptures equal to her own, to lead her to the church. When behold! a letter came, which, had it been written by any other hand than his, muſt have waited for peruſal till a more leiſure hour. But, alarmed with receiving this poor lifeleſs epiſtle, inſtead of an ardent lover, tremblingly ſhe unfolded it and read theſe words."

'Madam,

'COuld any thing obtain your pardon for 'my proceeding with you, it would be the 'grief with which I reflect upon it. I have too 'long acted the part of a hypocrite with you. 'Therefore as much as I ought to bluſh at this 'diſcovery of myſelf, I will not add to my for-'mer deceits, by framing falſe reaſons in my 'excuſe, but will, with the contrition of a re-'penting criminal, tell you the whole truth. 'My fortune, you know, is ſo involved in debt, 'partly of my father's, and partly of my own 'contracting, that it is only an incumbrance to 'me. Yours offered me a proſpect of obtaining

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'the eaſe and affluence mine could not give me.
'This induced me to addreſs you, and you were
'generouſly pleaſed to accept of me and my
'ſhattered fortune. As the time when we were
'to be united drew near (pardon the truth) I
'found my diſlike to you ſo very ſtrong, that no
'fortune could recompence me for paſſing my
'life with you. Had only my own happineſs
'weighed with me, I ſhould have broken off the
'match directly; but I owed you gratitude, and
'honour called upon me to fulfil my engage-
'ments. I determined to puniſh myſelf for the
'mercenary view that had at firſt led me into
'them, and behave ſo well to you that you
'ſhould have no cauſe of diſcontent, tho' at the
'expence of my own happineſs. I continued
'to act in conſequence to this reſolution, with
'grief of heart not to be deſcribed. But laſt
'night the careſſes that paſſed between us at
'parting, which proceeded from true affection
'on your ſide, and which I endeavoured to re-
'turn as proper in our ſituation, convinced me,
'that by marrying you, I might indeed keep
'up the appearance of honour, but muſt in rea-
'lity ſwerve from it moſt eſſentially. For I
'found my diſguſt ſo ſtrong, that it would be
'impoſſible for me to behave with the love you
'had reaſon to expect, and which gratitude de-
'manded. With this thought I have been tor-
'mented all night. I have not been in bed ſince
'we parted, and have but now been able to de-
'termine with myſelf, that it would be more juſt
'to inform you with my ſentiments, than to
'leave you to make the diſcovery by ſuffering
'from my future unavoidable neglect. I will
'add one word of advice, which is, that you

'would

'would hereafter be cautious of thinking you 'are beloved, whilſt you have a fortune that 'may tempt a man to pretend a paſſion for you: 'very few will feel the repentance I do. If any 'thing can plead in my favour, let it be that the 'diſtreſs in which I have choſen to continue, 'rather than to make you an unhappy wife, are 'ſo great, that if I cannot find ſome ſpeedy re-'lief, of which I have little hopes, I muſt end a 'life I have not the means of ſupporting.'

"Judge," continued Mademoiſelle, "how this muſt affect a woman whoſe imagination was full of fancied ſcenes of happineſs, and whoſe vanity equalled her love of matrimony. She tried to give this affair a thouſand different turns; but the truth was ſoon whiſpered abroad, and in a very little more time grew quite public. Aſhamed of being a general jeſt, ſhe retired with my mother to this place, where ſhe lived two years, railing at mankind, and vowing eternal hatred to the ſex. But no vows are leſs ſincere than thoſe made in anger. As hers abated with the deſire of having her diſappointment made up for by ſome truer lover, the vow was forgot; and ſhe once more appeared in Paris. The ſlight ſhe had received was refreſhed in people's memories by her appearance; and ſhe was for ſeveral years ſo much the object of ridicule, that no man had the aſſurance to ſhare it by addreſſing her. However, at laſt, one by neceſſity made courageous enough to venture the laugh of the world, and the careſſes that had ſo entirely diſguſted a former lover, began by his courtſhip to make her ſome amends for the indifference every one elſe had ſhewn towards her. His conſcience

was leſs ſqueamiſh than his predeceſſor's. He counterfeited better, and ſoon convinced her of the violence of his paſſion. Other people were not ſo eaſily impoſed on. My brothers and I uſed to laugh at her credulity, and aſk her, how ſhe could ſo eaſily believe a man's profeſſions, after having been ſo notoriouſly deceived. This queſtion often repeated, with hints to the ſame purpoſe, at laſt ſo piqued her, that ſhe told us, ſhe would convince us of the truth of her preſent lover's paſſion. The way ſhe took to prove it was by telling him with great appearance of grief, that by misfortunes ſhe related, ſhe had juſt had an account that her fortune was reduced to leſs than a quarter of what it had been, but that ſhe was enabled to ſupport this affliction by conſidering, that ſhe had ſtill enough to afford them a tolerable ſubſiſtance, provided they retired into one of the cheapeſt provinces in the kingdom. This declaration was more terrifying than a clap of thunder to her lover. Tho' to procure himſelf a gay life, he would have encumbered himſelf with her, yet he was not ſo near ſtarving as to accept of a retirement with ſuch a companion. Accordingly he deſired time to conſider of what ſhe told him; and the next day let her know, that he had an averſion to the country, and as her fortune was reduced, would not be ſo ungenerous as to clog her with a huſband, who could contribute very little to the joint expence. This ſecond diſappointment touched her even more than the firſt, as ſhe was many years older, and therefore in a more deſperate ſituation as to the proſpect of marriage, and as it gave us an opportunity of triumphing in our diſcernment. But all that is paſſed has not given

her an implacable hatred to your ſex. She ſtill tries to attract, and is as capable of being ſtrongly attracted as ever, which you have had reaſon to know, by the untimely love ſhe has taken for you."

Thus I was informed of the true characters of both theſe ladies, which you may imagine did not greatly endear them to me; tho' I was much indebted to them for the very great care they had taken of me in my ſickneſs. As ſoon as I began to ſpeak of going away, which my health I thought would ſoon permit, they all told me how much they ſhould be mortified, on finding that nothing could keep me but the want of ſtrength to leave them. This they repreſented ſo ſtrongly, and made me ſo ſenſible of the incivility of ſuch a proceeding, that notwithſtanding they were very diſagreeable to me, I determined to get the better of my reluctance, and ſtay with them a few days after I was recovered.

One day Mademoiſelle deſired me to mend a pen. When it was done, ſhe would make me try if it would write well, and inſiſted on my writing my own name for that purpoſe, as the words ſhe could look at with moſt pleaſure. When I had written what ſhe deſired, ſhe kiſſed the paper ſeveral times, and then put it in her pocket, ſaying, whatever had my name on it was too dear to be parted with by her. Perhaps you will think theſe gallantries a little extraordinary in a woman; but ſhe entertained me with ſuch continually. When I had ſtaid as long as I thought my complaiſance and gratitude obliged me to, I ordered my ſervant to prepare for my departure the next day. This having reached Madamoiſelle's ears, ſhe came into my room,

and begged of me to ſtay, in terms more preſſing and paſſionate than moſt lovers of our ſex could have uſed to a miſtreſs. I profeſſed myſelf obſtinate in the point, but promiſed to wait on them very ſoon again. In ſhort, I thought of nothing more than contriving to get out of the houſe, which ſhe pretty well gueſſed, and grew as fierce in her rage as ſhe had been in her love.

Before I was freed from her perſecutions, her aunt came to ſignify her concern for my intention of leaving them. She ſighed, dropt a tear or two, languiſhed, and played off all thoſe ſofter arts that may ſucceed with a blooming virgin, but ſo ill agree with wrinkles and old age. She couched ſo many tender lamentations on my approaching abſence, under the name of ſomebody, being too baſhful to name herſelf, that ſhe perplexed me more than her niece had done. Whilſt I was in the midſt of this ſcene, a letter was brought me, which I fancied came from my Cornelia. Impatient to inform her of my coming, as well as to ſee her, I diſpatched a note to her, and ſet out myſelf as ſoon as my horſe could be got ready. I was at the inn ſoon after the meſſenger who had brought me the letter was returned. But who can expreſs my ſurprize on ſeeing Henrietta inſtead of my lovely Cornelia!"

He then ſhewed the letter Henrietta had ſent him; repeated his anſwer, and all that paſſed between them when they met. "I returned," continued he, "overcome with my diſappointment. As ſoon as I got into the houſe, I went into my own apartment, and locking myſelf in, wrote an account to Cornelia of all that had paſſed, as I had done before by every poſt; and never till this morning diſcovered, that the bribery

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of this enraged lady had corrupted my ſervant, who had, at her deſire, ſtopped all the letters that came from Cornelia to me, and all that I wrote to her. I mention this circumſtance particularly, becauſe all that I have ſuffered, and how much that has been, you, my friend," turning to Deveaux, "can form ſome notion, has ariſen from her receiving none of my letters, after the firſt.

The day before that I had fixed for my departure, Madame De Garré deſired ſome private converſation with me, which, as hers was leaſt irkſome, I was glad of. But great was my aſtoniſhment, when ſhe began to repreſent to me, how inhuman and diſhonourable it was for a man to break his word with a woman, after having gained her affections, and that no word was ſo ſtrong as a contract. I could not gueſs at the meaning of her harangue, till on deſiring her to explain herſelf, ſhe told me, in a multitude of words, that I had made but a bad return to the friendſhip they had ſhewn me, by my refuſal to marry her daughter, after the promiſe of marriage I had given her. I affirmed, I had never thought of her daughter in a way that could tempt me to give her any ſuch promiſe: that I had been far from ever having ſaid a word to her that tended towards love. Upon this, ſhe drew out of her pocket the very piece of paper I had tried the pen upon for Mademoiſelle. I found that over my name was witten a contract in the ſtrongeſt terms. The ſight of this alarmed me, as I ſaw it muſt create me a great deal of trouble. At the ſame time, provoked with the villany of the deſign, I exclaimed very violently againſt ſuch treachery, and proteſted, that if it coſt me my life, it ſhould at leaſt never have the conſe-

quence intended, for that I muſt ever deteſt the woman who could commit ſo ſcandalous an action. I ſhall not repeat all that paſſed between the mother, the daughter, and myſelf; nor the offers the aunt made me of any aſſiſtance ſhe could give me in this affair. Her envy and hatred of her niece made her readily believe me; and ſhe hoped to ingratiate herſelf with me by taking my part.

I left this family in a rage, and went to my uncle's; where I had not been many days, before I was called to Paris, on account of the proceſs Madamoiſelle De Garré had begun againſt me. I will not trouble you with an account of the trial, as I have given it you printed at large. By it you will find, that the confeſſion of her own ſervant, who had writ the contract for her, and had been truſted by her with the manner in which ſhe had induced me to ſign my name; her confeſſion, I ſay, you will ſee cleared me, and produced a decree in my favour. My adverſary would have been puniſhed for the fraud, had not her friends had credit enough to get the penalty remitted, and ſhe returned back without any farther pain than ſhame and diſappointment.

As for myſelf, I had not ſuffered near ſo much by all the trouble of this vexatious ſuit, as by not hearing from my Cornelia. It is impoſſible to deſcribe what I felt; thoſe only that have loved can gueſs at the ſituation of my mind. During the courſe of this cauſe, I had a letter from my mother, full of rage for my imprudence, as ſhe believed I had really given the contract, and declaring ſhe would have no farther concern about me. This was a very perplexing circumſtance;

circumſtance; for I found her intention was to withdraw my allowance. Whilſt I was thinking on the method I could take to ſubſiſt, I had a ſum ſent me from an unknown hand, accompanied with an aſſurance of receiving the ſame every half year. It was ſo conſiderable, that my income was increaſed rather than diminiſhed by my mother's inhumanity. I made all poſſible inquiries, but I could never get the leaſt intelligence of my benefactor."

Bernardo was in ſo weak a ſtate of health and ſpirits, that he could not talk ſo long, without being apparently affected by it. Devaux, who was apprehenſive his friend would not be able to perform the taſk he was engaged in, obſerved it firſt, and deſired him to have a little more regard to his own eaſe; offering at the ſame time to ſupply his place, and continue the narration, for which he was very well qualified, having been Bernardo's inſeparable companion during his ſtay at Paris. This propoſal was very readily agreed to, and Devaux continued thus.

"Bernardo was now delivered from all the trouble the unaccountable love of Mademoiſelle De Garré had given him. His baniſhment from his mother's houſe was no misfortune, as he learned at laſt that Cornelia was gone from thence: he felt no want of money; and friends he is ſure to find in every place where he is known. Thus his ſituation would have been eaſy, had he not been a lover. Every day ſerved only to increaſe his melancholy. He avoided all company, and ſcarce ever ſtired abroad but to take ſome ſolitary walk. I had great reaſon to believe he found ſo much more ſatisfaction in the indulgence of his deſpair, than in my converſation, that he would

have been glad I had been more ſparing of it; but I was really too much concerned for his welfare, to conſider any thing but what I thought beſt for him. I was ſure his own melancholy imagination was his greateſt enemy, and therefore I was glad of any opportunity to interrupt his giving it full ſcope.

I hope I ſhall eaſily be forgiven, if I dwell on ſome circumſtances of his hiſtory, which will not be diſagreeable to the company, altho' foreign to the principal deſign of his account of himſelf, which was only to clear himſelf from the imputation of inconſtancy. I went one evening to his houſe, according to my uſual cuſtom, and was told, he was gone out to walk. I determined to wait his coming home, but began to grow uneaſy at his ſtaying out much longer than uſual. After inquiring which way he had taken, I went after him. Paſſing thro' a little ſtreet, I perceived a crowd of people. When I approached them, curioſity made me examine into the cauſe of their being aſſembled. I found that there was ſome ſcene of diſtreſs in the houſe before which they were gathered, tho' none of them could give me a diſtinct account of it. I endeavoured to get in, but was prevented by the crowd. I ſoon after diſtinguiſhed Bernardo's voice amidſt the cries and lamentations of women and children, and the threats of men who filled the entry. Moved by my apprehenſions for my friend, I exerted all my ſtrength to get to him, but could make no great progreſs, till he had contented thoſe clamorous men, whom I found to be bailiffs.

I then accompanied Bernardo up ſtairs, into a room, in which were five children almoſt frighted

frighted out of their ſenſes. At the upper end of the room was a young girl of about fifteen, who appeared in the deepeſt affliction. She was recovering out of a fit, when we came in; and, before ſhe was able to ſpeak, I had leiſure to obſerve that nature had been her friend, however fortune might perſecute her. She ſoon got ſtrength enough to make her acknowledgments to Bernardo, who, not content with the ſervices he had done her, begged to be informed of the ſtate of her affairs, that he might aſſiſt her farther. Many tears forced their way, before ſhe was able to comply with his requeſt; but as ſoon as ſhe was capable of entering into the melancholy detail, ſhe began to this effect.

"Tho' I am now an inhabitant of France, I am a native of Spain. My father was a younger brother of a good, tho' not very conſiderable family. My mother was born of one of the greateſt families in that kingdom. They conceived a mutual paſſion for each other; but as her rank, beauty, and fortune, might have entitled her to one of the beſt matches in Spain, many of which had been offered, tho' ſhe was then but extremely young, there was but little hope of obtaining the conſent of her friends to her marriage with a man who had nothing but merit to recommend him. As ſoon as their affection was ſuſpected, all the means that the jealous ingenuity of a Spaniſh brother and uncle could invent, were uſed to prevent any correſpondence between the lovers. But love, more ingenious ſtill, baffled theſe deſigns; and my father contrived to convey ſuch powerful perſuaſions to my mother, that ſhe promiſed to make her eſcape from her gaolers, and fly to him. It being not much more difficult to get away from

them, than to inform him of her intention, ſhe ſoon followed her letter, and they were married. They flattered themſelves, that, after their marriage, her friends would acquieſce in what they could not prevent, and not turn an act of imprudence into a misfortune, by diſtreſſing them with the effects of their anger. But herein they ſoon found themſelves miſtaken. My mother received an abſolute refuſal of her requeſt to be paid her fortune; and time, inſtead of abating, ſtrengthened the rage of her relations ſo much, that my father and ſhe ſoon found that Spain was no ſafe place for them. The youth of both might have pleaded a little in their excuſe. My father was but twenty-two, and my mother younger by five years. Had her relations been barely juſt, my parents might have lived in eaſe and honour. Their characters and behaviour gained them eſteem. Pomp and ſplendour they could not attain to, nor ever, I believe, did they once form a wiſh about them. Her family, from the cruel reſentments of a pretended juſtice, found means to reduce them to as great difficulties as two people could be in, who wiſhed for nothing beyond a neceſſary ſubſiſtence, and each other's company. However, they were for ſome time unacquainted with diſtreſs, notwithſtanding all the efforts of their enemies; the pleaſures of an uninterrupted converſation and indiſſoluble union being too great not to engage their thoughts entirely, and to keep them from anticipating fears and melancholy reflections. But at length they found the neceſſity of leaving Spain, and their choice was ſoon determined to France.

When they firſt came into this kingdom, they were almoſt deſtitute of every thing; but, inſtead

of

of giving way to grief and deſpair, they turned their thoughts to the contrivance of means to gain a ſubſiſtence. They ſucceeded ſo well, that, by their joint endeavours, they were enabled to ſupply themſelves with neceſſaries, which was all they aimed at: for when their labours were ended, they were ſure of greater ſatisfactions than money could purchaſe, in the converſation of each other. My father provided for his family by writing; and my mother, by different kinds of needle-work. Thus, by their induſtry, they ſupported a life, which the tendereſt affections, and beſt of tempers, made delightful to them.

One day as my mother was waiting for a lady, for whom ſhe had finiſhed ſome work, the lady's huſband came into the room. He was a man of too much gallantry, not to be ſtruck with the ſight of ſo beautiful a woman, and not to inform her of the impreſſion her charms had made upon him. He ſat down by her, and, after inquiring into her ſituation and circumſtances, began to lament that ſuch irreſiſtible charms ſhould not be placed in a rank more ſuitable to their luſtre. He aſſured her, that if ſhe gave him leave, he would, with inexpreſſible pleaſure, enable her to live in a manner more equal to her merits; and offered her, as a proof of the truth of his profeſſions, a purſe with a ſum in it, which to her muſt have been very conſiderable, tho' not tempting, as ſhe ſuſpected the intentions of the giver. To put an end to his hopes of ſucceſs, ſhe told him, that, in the moſt tender reciprocal affection between her and the moſt amiable of huſbands, ſhe enjoyed perfect happineſs. Had they not valued each other beyond all that wealth could beſtow, they would not have been reduced to the way of life they were now

in; and ſhe could venture to ſay, that time had much increaſed the affection that was before ſtrong enough to make them neglect every other conſideration. After ſaying this, ſhe would have retired, adding, ſhe would call another time, for ſhe fancied his lady would not return ſo ſoon as her ſervant expected. But he inſiſted on her ſitting down again, and took ſuch faſt hold of her hand, as deprived her of the power of executing her intention, without much buſtle. He then began to make the moſt ardent profeſſions of the paſſion with which ſhe had inſpired him, and offered her preferment for her huſband, and affluence for both, if ſhe would but permit him to viſit her. He ran into a long detail of all the pleaſures that money can buy, and the eaſe that muſt ariſe from plentiful circumſtances; aſſuring her, that the decay of love would always follow poverty, and that increaſe of family might make a ſubſiſtence, which was now with difficulty obtained, become inſufficient. My mother, enraged at his infamous propoſal, told him, that poverty had never appeared terrible to her, till now that it had expoſed her to hear ſuch deteſtable diſcourſe; that he had greatly miſtaken her, if he believed ſhe would exchange poverty and innocence for riches and guilt; that the only poverty ſhe feared, was that of the mind; ſhe ſaw it in him, and he had made her eſteem herſelf rich, by ſhewing himſelf ſo much her inferior in that reſpect. The ſcorn and anger of her countenance was too ſtriking not to affect him. He let go her hand, and ſhe immediately left the room; and, meeting the lady's woman, told her, that ſhe ſhould be greatly obliged to her, if ſhe would let her know her lady's commands, without her being obliged to come

come into that houſe again. The emotion with which ſhe uttered theſe words, and the haſte ſhe made to get away, together with the character his lordſhip bore, made it eaſy to gueſs her reaſons, and to comply with her deſire.

My mother had not been at home long, when the lady entered her room. She came up to, embraced my mother, and told her, that ſhe had been in the next chamber during the converſation between her and her huſband; that finding they were together when ſhe came home, jealouſy (for which his various amours had given her too much reaſon) had tempted her to liſten to their diſcourſe; that ſhe had been charmed with her ſentiments and behaviour; and if her friendſhip and intereſt had any weight, ſhe would ſhew her, that virtue is not always attended by adverſity; and the more effectually to aſſiſt her, ſhe intended to return that evening to meet with my mother and her huſband, and conſult on the means of providing for them. She then offered my mother her purſe, and inſiſted much on her accepting of it. But ſhe having been uſed to be ſupplied by her own hands, begged to be excuſed taking what no preſent neceſſity required. My mother added, that what ſhe had done was for her own ſake, and therefore the lady was under no obligation to her; but thought herſelf extremely obliged to her ladyſhip for her generous intentions, and aſſured her of the joy ſhe ſhould receive from ſeeing her at the time ſhe had appointed.

The reſult of the meeting was as ſucceſsful as the lady's aſſurances had been promiſing. She obtained a commiſſion in the army for my father; and not letting her generoſity ſtop here, ſhe got him promoted a little before her death, by adding

her intereſt to the reputation his courage and conduct had gained him. This ſucceſs brought plenty into our family; but my mother never could forbear lamenting it as a misfortune, ſince it expoſed my father to great dangers. No advantage of circumſtances could make her amends for the loſs of his company; and much leſs, for the fears ſhe ſo often laboured under. She was, for ſome years, puniſhed with this proſperity, till a war broke out between France and Spain. He was then offered a conſiderable command; but tho' he had love enough for honour to be called ambitious, he could not be led by it to do any thing he thought wrong. As ſuch, he looked upon an engagement to fight againſt his country. He was therefore reduced to give up a profeſſion he was as fond of, as he could be of any thing that carried him away from his family. But he thought it not conſiſtent with his honour, or integrity, to retain a poſt, the duties of which he could not fulfil. His majeſty, however, was graciouſly pleaſed to ſay, he would not loſe him entirely, though he no longer remained in his army, but would give him a place about his perſon.

This poſt afforded them a tolerable ſubſiſtence; and the happineſs of our little family was very complete, till my mother was ſeized with a violent fever, in which her life was ſoon deſpaired of. My father's grief was inexpreſſible. However, nature proved too ſtrong for the diſtemper. After having lain for ſome days in ſo weak a condition, that we feared every moment would be her laſt, ſhe ſhewed ſigns of amendment, and, in a ſhort time, was judged to be out of danger. Joy now took the place of grief in our hearts. But, alas! how ſhort ſighted are we! the unhappy period that

brought

brought on all our misfortunes, was near. My father had ſuffered much during my mother's illneſs; he had paſſed three weeks in the moſt extreme anxiety and deſpair, without ſtirring from her bed-ſide. The agitation of his mind, and perhaps ſome infection from the diſtemper, threw him into a fever likewiſe. The ſymptoms appeared mortal from the firſt. In a few days he died, after having taken leave of us all in the moſt affecting manner, and given us the beſt advice for our future conduct, and endeavoured to ſtrengthen our minds in the love of virtue. When he attempted to bid my mother adieu, the ſight of her grief, the thought of parting with her, and of leaving her doubly oppreſſed, both by ſorrow and poverty, got the better of all his reſolution; and uttering, in broken accents, a few tender ſentences, he expired in her arms. She became inſtantly as lifeleſs as himſelf, and was not for a long time recovered out of the fit ſhe was in, no one being in a condition to take any reaſonable methods to bring her to herſelf. Happy had it been for her, if her life had ended then! She revived only to feel the moſt extreme ſorrow. She was ſpeechleſs for near a fortnight, and ſeemed inſenſible to every thing. She viſibly decayed, and was ſoon reduced to keep her bed from weakneſs. Our phyſician acquitted himſelf with the utmoſt care, but with no other effect than to give her ſtrength enough to ſpeak for a few moments. In theſe intervals, ſhe expreſſed a deſire to live; though her miſery could never be alleviated. She ſaid, ſhe would bear it for our ſakes. She often wept over us; and her weakneſs returning, and increaſing hourly, put an end to her wretched life, and deprived

prived us of the laſt remaining, of the beſt, the kindeſt, and tendereſt of parents.

Theſe cruel misfortunes were immediately aggravated by the barbarity of thoſe, who, during this time of ſickneſs, were become our creditors; our ſmall pittance not having been ſufficient to defray all the extraordinary expences we were at. Being too well informed of our circumſtances, and expecting no other payment than what they could provide for themſelves, they ſent bailiffs to ſeize our goods. Little uſed to ſuch ſcenes, my terror was inexpreſſible, and was much increaſed by the diſtreſs my poor little brothers and ſiſters were in. Some ran for ſhelter into the next room, to my poor mother's body, others hung on me, equally incapable of aſſiſting them. I thought, before this incident, I could not have been more miſerable; but now I found myſelf abſolutely diſtracted. In this condition I was, when that gentleman" (pointing to Bernardo) "came in, and gave me his charitable aſſiſtance; for which I am for ever bound in gratitude to him, and ſhall feel it to my lateſt breath."

Here tears ſtopped her words. Bernardo aſſured her, he heartily pitied the condition to which ſhe and the reſt of the family were reduced; and that he would take care to make them eaſy. He told her, ſhe might depend on his conſtant aſſiſtance; and to remove any ſcruples ſhe might be apt to have, he would never viſit her, after ſhe was once conveniently placed. He added, that he aimed at no more than the pleaſure of relieving a perſon who ſeemed ſo highly to deſerve it. He hinted gently to her, that he would take care of her mother's funeral; and as ſhe would be forced to abandon all that was in the houſe to the creditors,

tors, he deſired her to conſider of ſome place where ſhe might lodge with ſafety and reputation, and he would ſee her placed there directly, till ſhe could provide herſelf with a houſe.

The ſincerity which appeared to accompany his words, and the diſtreſs ſhe was in, inclined her to accept his offers. But ſhe told him, ſhe hoped to put him to no farther expence than what aroſe immediately from the preſent charge he took upon himſelf.

The night had paſſed in theſe converſations, and it was now day-break, when Bernardo offered to attend her to the place ſhe had fixed upon; but ſhe refuſed to leave the houſe, whilſt her mother's body remained in it. Upon this, we went and ordered every thing for the funeral, which was performed that afternoon. We afterwards repaired to the diſtreſſed family, and carried them, more dead than alive, to a very reputable houſe, which Sylvia (the eldeſt ſiſter) had choſen. We had before ordered every thing for their reception; ſo that they were immediately accommodated. Bernardo gave her ſome money, and aſſured her of a conſtant ſupply, of what would be ſufficient to provide for them, in the frugal manner they had been uſed to. He told her, that as her youth and beauty might render her more liable to be reflected upon, he would ſcarce ever come near her himſelf, but gave her a direction where to ſend to him, in caſe ſhe ſhould ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance. He then inſiſted upon the ſame promiſe from me, of not viſiting her; which, I own, was not ſo readily given. But this gives him no right to triumph in a ſuperiority of virtue; ſince love, not philoſophy, was his guard. Had my affections been as entirely engaged as his, I could have been as cheaply

virtuous,

virtuous, and as eaſily have determined not to ſee a pretty woman, when I was inſenſible to any pleaſure ariſing from the ſight of her beauty. However, though unwillingly, I did promiſe not to viſit her.

Sylvia's heart overflowed with the moſt grateful acknowledgements to Bernardo; partly for the charitable aſſiſtance he had given her, but more ſtill for the regard he had ſhewn for her, in reſolving to prevent the malicious ſuggeſtions, to which his great generoſity might give riſe. She told him, ſhe hoped to be able to live without further preſuming on his goodneſs. We ſate ſome time with her, in hopes of alleviating her exceſſive grief and melancholy. We returned to her a few days afterwards, and found her a little rouſed by the neceſſary cares which employed her. She had formed a very prudent ſcheme of life, and had contrived in the beſt manner imaginable, to make all her brothers and ſiſters, young as they were, of ſome ſmall uſe. Her underſtanding and heart appeared ſo amiable, and raiſed the luſtre of her beauty ſo much, that I could have wiſhed to prolong our viſit to a later hour than I believe would have been proper: but my wiſe guide carried me away, after we had taken a ſort of farewel of her, which drew tears from eyes ſo long uſed to ſhed them. She thanked us fervently for our kind regard for her welfare, and character. She ſaid, ſhe muſt always retain the moſt grateful ſenſe of our delicacy, altho' ſhe thereby loſt the high ſatiſfaction of ſeeing her benefactors, and was deprived of the only means in her power, of ſhewing her gratitude.

We have often ſince taken care to hear of her, but have ſeldom ſeen her. She leads the moſt re-

tired,

tired, induſtrious life that can be, and amazingly contrives to provide for her large family, with very little foreign aſſiſtance; for ſhe has returned moſt of the money that Bernardo from time to time ſent her. The attention this affair required was of ſervice to Bernardo, as it a little removed his thoughts from a melancholy ſubject that preyed both on his ſpirits and health. I would not loſe the favourable opportunity this incident gave me, but, by my earneſt entreaties, prevailed on him to appear a little in the world, and not live a recluſe in the gayeſt city in Europe. His diſguſt would often get the better of his complaiſance to me, but yet habit at length made company appear leſs terrible to him.

One of the houſes we moſt frequented, tempted by the agreeableneſs of the lady to whom it belonged, and the concourſe of polite company which met there, was that of Madame La Comteſſe De ———. She is in the autumn of her age, and has all the charms that time of life is capable of. She is not more agreeable in her addreſs, her politeneſs, and the genteel turn of her underſtanding, to her friends and viſiters, than in her temper to her own family. A daughter, her only child, enjoys in her the eaſe and moſt agreeable qualities of a friend, with the tenderneſs and prudence of a mother. This young lady was about eighteen. Her perſon was fine, and her countenance the moſt pleaſing that could be. Her face, tho' not regularly beautiful, yet was charming by the ſweetneſs and good ſenſe that ſhone in her eyes. I never ſaw a woman at her age ſo free from the ſpirit of coquetry. Her taſte was very delicate, which, without any mixture of pride, made her reſerved to the generality of men, but entirely

entirely eaſy and affable with ſuch as could lay the leaſt claim to her approbation. Tho' ſhe avoided thoſe ſhe diſliked, it was with a ſweetneſs that diſarmed all their reſentment. She chiefly converſed with thoſe of a more advanced age; preferring people who could at once entertain and improve her underſtanding, to thoſe who would do little elſe than flatter her. She had a great deal of vivacity, but it was accompanied by ſo great a ſhare of true wit, and ſound judgment, that ſhe never reliſhed any converſation that was not rational.

As Bernardo's turn of mind ſo much reſembled hers, they naturally choſe to converſe with the ſame people. The little reſemblance there was between him and moſt of the young men of the age, made her cultivate his acquaintance with pleaſure. It was not long before I perceived that ſhe was poſſeſſed with a ſofter paſſion than friendſhip. Her vivacity decayed; ſhe avoided all converſation, when he was not there, excepting that ſhe would ſometimes favour me with hers. The diſtinction would have flattered me, had I not known the only merit ſhe ſaw in me was being his friend. I could perceive the increaſe of her love, and all the various turns of her mind; for her thoughts were eaſily read in her countenance. Forgive me, madam," turning to Cornelia, if "I ſay I wiſhed her ſucceſs. Such a woman muſt have made any man happy; but one ſo capable of ſeeing and eſteeming her worth, would have been bleſſed indeed. She had a fortune that would have enriched him. Her birth would honour any huſband ſhe could take. Then to be delivered from the unhappy paſſion that poſſeſſed him, was of itſelf a felicity. I joined my endeavours

yours to her charms. I omitted no opportunity of declaring my opinion of her. I found he eſteemed her very highly, but that his heart was not in the leaſt changed. He had no ſuſpicions of being beloved, nor would I open his eyes, but thought it beſt to leave eſteem and time to do their parts.

Mademoiſelle De —— had too entire confidence in her mother, to conceal any thing from her. She confeſſed to her the love ſhe bore Bernardo. The counteſs had much leſs vanity than affection for her daughter. The character he bore, the merit that ſhone in him, and the tenderneſs her daughter expreſſed for him, ſoon prevailed over the objection that might have been made to the inequality of his fortune. She conſidered, that her daughter had what was ſufficient for both. The counteſs had no deſire to make her richer, at the expence of her happineſs. She gave her the kindeſt aſſurances of her conſent and approbation. She reſolved to do more, and try how Bernardo was diſpoſed towards her daughter.

Not long after this, as I happened one day to be at her houſe, when no other company was there, ſhe took the opportunity, and, by talking of the intimacy that ſubſiſted between her daughter and my friend, tried to find out whether he liked her. I anſwered, as the perfect eſteem he had for the young lady obliged me to do. What I ſaid, encouraged the counteſs to explain herſelf farther, and to aſk me, if I thought her daughter and her fortune had charms ſufficient to prevail on my friend to marry her. For that if he loved her as much as ſhe deſerved, his merit would, in her eyes, ſupply the place of wealth. I durſt not anſwer

ſwer her as I wiſhed, fearing Bernardo's prepoſſeſſion was too ſtrong to permit him to comply with the propoſal; and I was therefore reduced to confeſs my ignorance in that point. She commiſſioned me to mention it to him. This I did when he returned home in the evening, after a converſation of ſome hours with Mademoiſelle De ——, who, from the pleaſure ſhe had received from the tenderneſs of the counteſs, had appeared more charming than ever that night.

I accompanied the propoſal with all the perſuaſions I could utter. I placed it in every light that was favourable; but with ſo little ſucceſs, that I could obtain no other anſwer, than that the faithleſſneſs of his Cornelia could not cure his love, which remained as ſtrong as ever; and therefore, he could not accept of the honour thoſe ladies did him. He was indeed greatly affected with the thought of his being the cauſe of a moment's pain to a woman for whom he had ſo much eſteem and friendſhip; and whom he thought, in every reſpect, ſuperior to all her ſex, but his beloved Cornelia. He deſired me to make the ſtate of his mind known to the counteſs, and to agree upon any meaſures with her, which we ſhould think moſt proper in thoſe circumſtances.

In conſequence of this commiſſion, I declared the ſituation of his heart to the counteſs, and deſired her to make what uſe of it ſhe pleaſed. And we agreed, that ſhe ſhould inform her daughter of ſo much as might ſerve to prevent her from encouraging a paſſion, which ſhe might otherwiſe reaſonably hope to ſee returned; and that from the manner in which ſhe would appear to be affected by this declaration, we ſhould form a ſcheme for Bernardo's future conduct.

A few days after this converſation, the counteſs ſent to me, and told me, that, with an aching heart, ſhe had ventured to inform her daughter of Bernardo's having been long engaged to a young woman whom he idolized; and therefore ſhe begged her daughter to conſider, whether his abſence might not facilitate her conqueſt of a hopeleſs paſſion. The counteſs had ſoftened this information with all the tenderneſs her heart could dictate, and ſeemed not in a much better condition than her daughter; who, overcome with the painful news, was incapable of making any other anſwer than with her tears. She grew very ill, and could not leave her room for ſome days. The counteſs made her indiſpoſition a pretence for refuſing to admit company; and ſpent that time in trying to amuſe her. The tenderneſs of a mother ſhe loved as much as ſhe reſpected, did not prove ineffectual to Mademoiſelle De ——. She was ſo moved by ſeeing a parent condeſcend to feel, and try to alleviate her concern, that ſhe determined to get the better of a melancholy in which her mother ſo kindly took a ſhare. The reaſon of this young lady was too ſtrong to be exerted in vain. She promiſed to divert her thoughts by company; and ſaid, ſhe believed ſhe could be very happy, if ſhe was aſſured Bernardo would always love her as his friend; and ſhe hoped, ſhe ſhould ſo far overcome her paſſion, as to ſuffer no more pain from it. The counteſs and I ſeeing her in ſuch diſpoſitions, agreed it would be beſt to keep her daughter intirely ignorant of all that had paſſed; and that Bernardo ſhould come to the houſe, and behave as uſual; only that he ſhould now and then give her room to ſee that his heart was pre-engaged.

It was ſome time before Mademoiſelle De —— recovered her looks. Bernardo viſited her as uſual, and ſhe gave him all the marks of an unfeigned friendſhip, which he very cordially returned. By degrees he made her the confidante of his paſſion for Cornelia. The emotions with which ſhe at firſt heard him, affected us all extremely. But in time, ſhe brought herſelf to converſe with him upon that tender topic, with eaſe; and ſhe ſeems, in all appearance, to have gained a greater conqueſt over herſelf than almoſt any one ever did before. The counteſs confirms me in the belief I have of this victory of reaſon, and joins with me in admiring it.

I declared when I began, how little liable I was to be tired of talking, of which, I doubt not I have fully convinced you. But yet I cannot forbear mentioning a widow marchioneſs who reſembled Mademoiſelle De —— in her love for Bernardo, tho' not in many other reſpects. She is very rich, young, and handſome: advantages ſhe values highly; and which ſhe turns, as much as poſſible, to her entertainment. She is a finiſhed coquet. Nature has given her ſome wit, and ſhe has a vivacity that often paſſes f r it. I never knew a woman who captivated more men. She was formed to inſpire paſſion more than eſteem. She ſingled out Bernardo, as the only perſon worthy of a return to that love ſhe wiſhed every one ſhould have for her. She exerted all her arts unſucceſsfully. He gave her ſo little attention, that he ſcarce perceived them; and her deſign never once entered his thoughts. I have often been ill-natured enough, to laugh at the diſappointment I have ſeen her under, when after playing off her attractive arts, ſhe found him

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ſo wrapt up in his own thoughts, that all ſhe ſaid and did, paſſed unobſerved. She would ſometimes fret till her features were robbed of the beautiful compoſure, in which ſhe had ranged them. At others, would fly into ſo great a paſſion, that after ſome bitter reproaches, which he received with as much inſenſibility as he did her kindneſs, to prevent too great an eclat, ſhe has been obliged to retire till ſhe had recovered herſelf, and had baniſhed anger from her eyes. She would then return all ſmiles and love.

A woman of this diſpoſition, you may gueſs, would not pine in ſecret love. Finding him ſlow in comprehending the moſt obvious ſigns, ſhe ventured to try the power of words. And after informing him, that ſhe was not ignorant of her own charms and merits, and how univerſally they had been ſighed for, ſhe acquainted him, in pretty plain terms, with her paſſion, invited him to make them legally his own, and ſhare a ſplendid fortune with her. This ſhe expreſſed in the manner of one who expects to have her offers accepted with rapture. But what a fall had her intranced imagination, when inſtead of the extaſies ſhe expected in return, Bernardo coldly thanked her, but owned his heart pre-engaged! Love was, by a moſt ſpeedy tranſition, turned to rage. She told him, ſhe ſhould never forgive herſelf the meanneſs of having loved one ſo unworthy. She ſpared no reproaches for his bad taſte; and, in the moſt opprobrious terms, loaded the unknown fair with all the abuſe her imagination could ſuggeſt. Bernardo, rejoiced that her diſappointment took a turn which would ſoon vent itſelf, without proving very detrimental to her, bore it with great philoſophy. But ſee-

ing no likelihood of her rage ſubſiding, he thought it beſt to withdraw, and leave this furious lady to herſelf. He has ſince often met his marchioneſs; but ſhe has never deigned to ſpeak to him.

Altho' I believe he has received no more ſuch explicit overtures, yet he has had invitations to love, from many bright eyes. I have obſerved ſeveral young women, who with virgin modeſty have ſtolen, as they thought, unſeen looks at him; and paid a tribute of ſighs to a perſon which captivated them. Others have watched their husband's abſence, or inattention, to let him read love in their eyes. And ſome widows have been more open in their civilities to him.

But all theſe furniſhed him with little entertainment. The only ſatisfaction he ſeemed capable of receiving, was from reading; from converſing with the learned, amongſt whom he was greatly carreſſed, being united in friendſhip with ſome of the greateſt genius's of the age; and in doing good offices to all who ſtood in need of them. He has often made a worthy uſe of the arts of perſuaſion, which nature has ſo laviſhly beſtowed upon him; having reconciled many, whoſe quarrels had been judged irreconcileable, and prevailed on many to be juſt who ſeemed quite otherwiſe diſpoſed. It is painful to me, to ſuppreſs the many things of this kind he has done; or not to mention his refuſal of a place of conſiderable diſtinction at court, becauſe it had before been promiſed to another man, who by that promiſe, had been prevented from engaging in a way of life, that might have brought the neceſſary addition to his paternal fortune. At ſome other time, when your ears are leſs

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tired than they muſt be at preſent, I may perhaps give you a particular account of theſe things.

I ſhall now draw towards a concluſion, by telling you, that neither the ladies, nor the learned could give him that eaſe of mind, of which the abſence, and ſtill more cruel ſilence of his Cornelia had robbed him. He felt conſtantly the wound her ſuppoſed inconſtancy had made. Inſtead of recovering the hurt it had done his conſtitution, he decayed viſibly. I had ſtrongly before my eyes, the danger of loſing him in a very ſhort time. I prevailed on him to take advice. But the phyſicians declared, that nothing but eaſe of mind could preſerve his life; and that their art was uſeleſs in his caſe.

A few days ago he received a letter from his mother, the purport of which was, to let him know, that if he was more diſpoſed to conform himſelf to her will, and ſhew he had as great a regard to his true intereſt as ſhe had for him, he ſhould be received at home with pleaſure, both by herſelf and by Henrietta, who was weak enough ſtill to retain a love for him, tho' he had ſhewn himſelf ſo little worthy of it. He wrote an anſwer, to excuſe his accepting her invitation, and to apologize for his continuance in his former ſentiments.

Wearied out with his fruitleſs inquiries after Cornelia, he told me, he had determined to travel over the whole kingdom, and make a ſtrict inquiry in every place for her, till chance ſhould bring him where ſhe was. The deſign was ſtrange. But, as I hoped change of place, air, and exerciſe, might be of ſervice to him, I did not oppoſe it. Nor, in his ſtate of health, could I bear to be abſent from him, ſo deſired I

might accompany him. He, with pleaſure, conſented, and we were to have begun our progreſs two days hence, if our ſearch had not been ſo happily ſtopped."

Devaux ended his narration; the latter part of which drew ſome tears from Cornelia, who felt much pain from thinking of what Bernardo had ſuffered on her account. But the great proofs he had given of his conſtancy, which had at firſt filled her with joy, made the more laſting impreſſion. Her mind was now incapable of retaining melancholy for any long time, when ſhe had ſo much reaſon to believe all the cauſes of it at an end.

Many days had not paſſed, before Bernardo and Cornelia agreed to marry, without any farther delays. Her fortune was ſufficient for them both, if they lived at the place ſhe had before inhabited. Mr. and Madame De Rhone were happy in the expectation of ſeeing them at laſt fixed in their neighbourhood. Lucinda had her ſhare in the general ſatisfaction. They wrote her an account of all that had paſſed; and told her, they intended ſoon to be with her: and that Bernardo would inſiſt on Madame De La Roche's permitting her to live with them. No people could be more happy than the two lovers, in being thus rewarded for what they had ſuffered, and in hopes of being now at the end of all their diſtreſſes.

The night before that fixed upon for the celebration of their nuptials, they conſented to accompany Mr. and Madame De Rhone to a new play. They had not been long ſeated before Mr. De Rhée entered the next box, with a lady, whom Bernardo acquainted them was his wife. Mr.

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De Rhée had gone to the Spâ at Bourbon for an indiſpoſition. The place appeared very dull to him, without his uſual amuſement of gallantry to enliven it, therefore he pitched on a very pretty young woman, who was there with her mother, to be the object of his addreſſes. The gaiety of her temper, and freedom of her carriage, made her more attracting to him, who meant no more than a little preſent amuſement. He was very well received by the lady, and not being able to chooſe a more gracious princeſs, he continued very aſſiduous in his courtſhip.

When the time of his departure drew near, the nymph finding by his diſcourſe, that he intended to leave her with the place, conſulted with her mother about the means of making him do a laſting pennance for his raſh courtſhip. For this purpoſe they ſent for near half a ſcore of male relations, who went to Mr. De Rhée with all the impudence of true bullies, and required ſatisfaction for the affront he had put on their relation, by making love ſo long without intending marriage. Mr. De Rhée found that they were all diſpoſed to fight him, and did not chooſe to venture his life ſo often over; nor yet was he inclined to exchange a liberty, which, to him, had ſo many charms, for the ſlavery of a husband; eſpecially to one, who would, probably, abridge no man's freedom but that of her ſpouſe. He was ſome time in ſettling the queſtion, whether he ſhould prefer fighting ten duels to marrying one wife. The firſt indeed would be the ſhorteſt evil; but then he conſidered, that it might moſt probably become ſo by the ſhortneſs of his life. At laſt he declared in favour of matrimony, which he thought could ſcarce be more diſagreeable than

the grave, and choſe to live a husband rather than run the riſk of not living at all. And to quicken his reſolutions, theſe fierce relations of the lady would not loſe ſight of him till the indiſſoluble knot was tied.

When the ceremony was over, they left him to reconcile himſelf, in the beſt manner he could, to the match. His wife, knowing he had been induced to it, only by having death placed before his eyes, thought herſelf little obliged to him for the preference, and in her turn ſlighted him, for thoſe who had a proper ſenſe of her charms, without their being ſet off by ſuch a foil as that grim ſpectre. What made the jeſt run ſtronger on Mr. De Rhée was, that every one elſe was perſuaded, that if his ſword had been drawn, thoſe of this bullying family would have returned peaceably into their ſcabbards. But the terror they infuſed into him was ſo great, that he ſeems not yet recovered from it; he is as much afraid of his wife, as if ſhe, like the reſt of her family, wore a ſword, and he winks at her gallantries with all the complaiſance of the moſt obſequious husband.

With this lady it was, that Mr. De Rhée came to the play. But had he been more inclined to converſe with her, his attention would ſoon have been withdrawn from her by the ſight of Cornelia, who was improved in beauty ſince he ſaw her, and particularly ſo, ſince the happineſs ſhe had now, tho' but for a ſmall time, enjoyed. Mr. De Rhée's preſence did not contribute to her eaſe. She could not ſee him without recollecting the terrors into which ſhe had been put by him. His aſſurance ſoon got the better of his ſurprize, and he accoſted her; but her reſentment was too ſtrong

ſtrong to permit her to make him a reply. He was nettled at the anger and ſcorn with which ſhe treated him, but more piqued ſtill by her behaviour to Bernardo, with whom ſhe appeared to converſe with great pleaſure and familiarity.

As Cornelia was going out of the play-houſe, Mr. De Rhée met her, and attempted to take her hand, which Bernardo would not ſuffer. This began a ſcuffle. Swords were ſoon drawn, and Mr. De Rhée was ſeverely wounded, and diſarmed, before any body could come to part them. Bernardo received a ſlight hurt; but this was the leaſt evil brought upon him by this combat. He was immediately ſurrounded by a great crowd, and ſoon after taken into cuſtody by the officers of juſtice, and then removed to the baſtile by an order from the king, to whom the affair had been miſrepreſented.

Cornelia's grief and fear were inexpreſſible. Mr. De Rhone exerted himſelf with that true ſpirit and zeal of friendſhip ſo peculiar to himſelf, and ſucceeded ſo well, that he obtained leave to ſee Bernardo, and to carry any friend with him, and had alſo great hopes given him of his ſpeedy releaſe. Mr. De Rhone went directly to inform his impriſoned friend of the ſucceſs of his endeavours; and promiſed to let him enjoy the moſt agreeable fruits of his ſolicitations by bringing Cornelia to him. Mr. De Rhone then haſtened to her, and returned with her to Bernardo, as ſoon as the firſt flutter of her joy was ſufficiently abated, to ſuffer her to accompany him. The ſight of her gave Bernardo inexpreſſible joy; but hers was much allayed by the diſmal appearance of the place where he was confined. A thouſand anxious fears aroſe in her mind,

which were, however, ſoon diſpelled, by ſeeing him, and by the confidence ſhe had in Mr. De Rhone's friendſhip and intereſt.

They enjoyed theſe interviews for a few days, in continual expectation, that every moment would be the laſt of his confinement. Mr. De Rhone being one day obliged to go a few miles out of Paris, about particular buſineſs, ſent a letter to acquaint Bernardo, that he would be diſcharged that evening, as ſoon as the proper officer for that purpoſe, returned to town. The priſon now no longer appeared melancholy to them, and many hours paſſed very agreeably in expectation of the happy moment. At laſt the officer appeared; they received him with great joy, and Bernardo began to make him his compliments of farewel. But he was told, he might defer them till a more proper opportunity, for that the king, inſtead of having given any orders to releaſe him, had commanded him into ſtricter confinement than ever. This was like a ſentence of death to the two lovers, who could not ſupport themſelves under it. Bernardo had ſcarce ſtrength enough to catch his fainting Cornelia in his arms. Tho' the officer was, by long uſe, grown pretty callous to human diſtreſs, yet her beauty ſoftened his heart a little, and made him, with ſome ſigns of pity, inform her, when ſhe recovered, that ſhe was included in this new ſentence, and was alſo to be confined. He was ſurprized to ſee that ſhe ſeemed to receive ſome ſatisfaction on this occaſion. But he ſoon put an end to all comfort, by his requiring her to go with him to the room appointed for her. Bernardo aſked, if they might not ſometimes meet. But all the anſwer he received was, that they were neither

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of them permitted to ſee any one, but the neceſſary people to attend them; and leaſt of all each other. They aſked, what new offence had occaſioned this alteration? They were told, it was a rule in the baſtile, to leave ſuch informations to the conſciences of the criminals; and that it was the part of a good officer to ſee the execution of, and not give reaſons for, the ſentence. He concluded, by deſiring Cornelia to detain him no longer.

Bernardo could not bear the thought of parting with her. He caught her in his arms, and vowed nothing ſhould take her from him; uttering a thouſand extravagant things dictated by the exceſs of his paſſion. But, at length, when his ſenſes were a little more compoſed, the officer made him ſenſible of the neceſſity of obedience. The lovers took a farewel of each other, as if it had been their laſt. Cornelia was led into a very melancholy chamber: but the ſtate of her mind was ſo wretched, that ſhe could be but little moved by any external object.

Mr. De Rhone had no ſooner left Paris, than Mad. De La Roche appeared at the palace, and moſt earneſtly begged an audience of the king. She had been informed by the ſpies ſhe had ſet on Bernardo of all that had paſſed, and ſhe came to Paris with the reſolution to ſtop his marriage with Cornelia. When ſhe appeared before the king, ſhe threw herſelf at his feet, and begged his aſſiſtance to ſave her ſon from ruin. She proceeded to tell his majeſty, that this ſon had been long infatuated with the beauty of a woman, who had been a ſervant in her houſe; that his paſſion had led him to the higheſt breaches of

duty and honour, and had cauſed him to commit many enormities; that he was come to ſuch a height of madneſs, as to be determined to marry this woman as ſoon as he was releaſed, however detrimental ſuch a match might be to his fortune and reputation; and that neither the lowneſs of her birth, nor the vileneſs of her character, could deter him. She then launched out into all the invectives that her malice could invent, and concluded, by begging his majeſty to confine him, and the woman likewiſe, till he ſhould be ſufficiently reſtored to his reaſon, to give up all thoughts of ſo ſcandalous an union. The king granted her requeſt, and in conſequence, gave the orders above related.

Mr. and Madame De Rhone, on their return to Paris, heard, with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, that both their friends were cloſely confined, and not permitted to ſpeak to each other, or to any one elſe. Mr. De Rhone went directly to court, where he was informed of the cauſe of this melancholy change. Both he and his Julia were moſt ſenſibly affected; and determined to uſe their utmoſt endeavours to oppoſe Madame De La Roche. They employed the credit of all their friends to diſabuſe the king, and at laſt obtained leave to bring Cornelia before him, to make her defence. Mr. De Rhone judged that her beauty would prove the moſt powerful advocate; and that Octavio's abſence from court, at that time, would enable her to perform her taſk with leſs confuſion.

Cornelia was conducted to her audience by Madame Du Maine, who was come to Paris, to try what ſhe could do for her ſervice. She was alſo accompanied by Mr. and Madame De Rhone, and all the perſons of diſtinction of their acquaintance,

quaintance, with whom they had any influence. Cornelia was dreſſed in the moſt becoming manner imaginable, with a ſimplicity and negligence ſuitable to the humble part ſhe was to act, and to her preſent unfortunate ſituation. Curioſity had filled all the rooms thro' which ſhe was to paſs to the king's preſence. The dignity of her air ſtruck all with admiration as ſoon as ſhe appeared. But when ſhe drew nearer, her exceſſive beauty, the delicacy of her whole perſon, and the perfection of her form, charmed every beholder. Murmurs of ſurprize and applauſe went thro' the rooms, which ſerved a little to revive her. She appeared before the king with courage, and yet with the moſt engaging modeſty. His majeſty, prejudiced by her appearance as much as his ſubjects, received her very graciouſly. She gave him an account, tho' not without putting great force upon herſelf, of all that could tend to her juſtification. She referred him to Madame Du Maine, and Madame De Rhone for her character and behaviour, if he would condeſcend to inquire of them. She ſaid, they had known her longer, and much more intimately than Madame De La Roche, who was apparently a prejudiced perſon. She concluded, by begging her own liberty and Bernardo's in the moſt earneſt manner. This requeſt ſhe made on her knees, and in ſo graceful a manner, and with ſuch an air of truth and innocence, that the king could no longer reſiſt. He aſſured her, that ſhe ſhould be no longer treated as a cloſe priſoner, but ſhould have an apartment in his palace, tho' out of regard to Madame De La Roche, he could not diſpenſe with placing a guard over her till matters were accommodated.

She thanked his majeſty with a very ill grace, not having obtained what ſhe moſt wiſhed for.

She ventured to tell the monarch, that her own liberty was what concerned her leaſt: that the reflection that Bernardo was confined on her account, would be more grievous to her than the cloſeſt priſon: that ſhe humbly preſumed, his liberty would be more agreeable to Madame De La Roche than hers, and would equally prevent the marriage that lady ſo much dreaded: that if his majeſty would be pleaſed to change his ſentence, and grant to Bernardo, what he had ſo graciouſly offered her, ſhe then ſhould feel an inexpreſſible ſatisfaction; and ſhe moſt earneſtly entreated his conſent to this alternative.

The king could not help ſmiling at her importunity; but told her, that if ſhe was too generous to be concerned about herſelf, it was neceſſary that ſome other ſhould: that he would be the perſon, and muſt therefore refuſe her requeſt at preſent, tho' ſhe might be aſſured, that Bernardo ſhould ſoon obtain his liberty, if Madame De La Roche was properly complied with. He added, that Mr. De Rhone ſhould have leave to viſit him, and inform him of what had paſſed.

Cornelia was forced to be contented with her ſucceſs, tho' it fell far ſhort of her wiſhes. Her friends were well pleaſed, and ſhe received the congratulations of many, even ſtrangers, as ſhe returned through the royal apartments. Her anſwers charmed as much as her perſon had done. But ſhe was glad to get free from theſe civilities as ſoon as poſſible, not feeling that joy which every one ſeemed to feel for her.

As ſoon as ſhe was left with her friends, ſhe begged Mr. De Rhone to make immediate uſe of the liberty allowed him. His impatience was little leſs than hers, and he haſtened to the baſtille with all

all imaginable ſpeed. Bernardo, overjoyed to ſee his friend, begged to know if he could give him any intelligence of his Cornelia. Mr. De Rhone then related to him all that had happened. This news gave Bernardo inexpreſſible joy, and he ſignified his gratitude to Mr. De Rhone in the moſt lively manner.

He then informed Mr. De Rhone, that two days before, he had had a letter from Madame De La Roche, aſſuring him, that if he would give her his word and honour, never to marry Cornelia, he ſhould be releaſed directly, and receive all the marks of her affection he could deſire: but that if he did not comply, his fate was in her hands, and he ſhould remain a priſoner to the end of his life. That he had hereupon ſhortly replied, that he never would abandon his Cornelia, but with his lateſt breath. He begged Mr. De Rhone to caution her againſt complying with any propoſal that might be made to her for the ſame purpoſe, as it ſeemed not improbable, that their enemies would apply to her, in hopes of obtaining from her generous concern for him, what all the menaces in the world could not obtain from himſelf. He concluded with ſaying, that he preferred his preſent ſituation, with the hopes ſhe would one day be his, to all that liberty and the world could give him without ſuch hopes.

Mr. De Rhone ſaid all he could to encourage his expectations of being ſoon reſtored to his Cornelia; and then left him, to carry that eaſe to her, which nothing but the knowledge of his health could give her. Her own ſituation was extremely agreeable in every reſpect, but that of being ſeparated from Bernardo. Perſons of the firſt quality of both ſexes began to court her acquaint-

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ance, and ſhe received a great many viſits from them. Curioſity brought ſome, inclination and compaſſion others, till it became a faſhion; and then it may eaſily be believed, her apartment was crouded. This way of life was more publick than ſhe would have choſen; but as ſhe might have occaſion for many friends, ſhe ſubmitted. She found more ſatisfaction than ſhe expected, from the concern many ſeemed to have for her intereſt, and the endeavours they uſed to promote it.

The king intimated an inclination to have her attend the court, which ſhe accordingly did, and had frequent converſations with his majeſty. Every one ſaw, that he was not ſo full of his dignity, but that he could condeſcend to envy an impriſoned ſubject. However, her continual ſollicitations for Bernardo's liberty, whenever ſhe had an opportunity, diſcouraged the monarch from making any declarations; tho' he tried, by all other means, to find out whether ambition might not divide her heart. But every thing ſhewed him the truth of her affection ſo plainly, that his eſteem for her increaſed very much, although he could not help being mortified at the ſame time.

After two months had paſſed ſince her leaving the baſtille, Madame De La Roche had returned into the country, thoroughly chagrined at the favour Cornelia was in with his majeſty, and the great intereſt ſhe had acquired among ſo many perſons of the firſt rank, who eſpouſed her cauſe and character ſo warmly, that her enemies began to deſpair of ſucceſs.

The king, one evening, after a long and gallant converſation with Cornelia, wherein ſhe had mixed, according to cuſtom, many petitions for

Bernardo's releaſe, told her, that tho' ſhe could, without pity, let a king ſigh in vain, it would be ſhameful if a king ſhould let her do ſo, as ſhe had a better title to command than hereditary right could give, and might more properly be ſaid to be poſſeſſed of a divine right than any monarch on his throne. He added, that he would ſhew her he could obey, and therefore declared Bernardo free from that moment. Her acknowledgements of his goodneſs were made with ſuch a warmth of joy and gratitude, that thoſe who had not heard the converſation, eaſily gueſſed the cauſe of them. She got an order directly, and, tranſported with her ſucceſs, would permit no one but herſelf to inform Bernardo of it; but went directly to the baſtille. The order procured her immediate admittance to his chamber. The pleaſure they received from this interview, can be imagined only by lovers as tender, and as unfortunate, as theſe two had hitherto been.

As ſoon as the tranſports of their firſt meeting were over, they went to communicate their happineſs to Mr. and Madame De Rhone. The next day was fixed upon for Bernardo to return thanks to the king. Bernardo was graciouſly received, and congratulated by every one on his liberty; but moſt of all, on the poſſeſſion of the affections of her who had procured it him. The king, amongſt the reſt, made him ſome polite compliments on that occaſion; and then, turning to Cornelia, told her, ſhe was no longer under any other guard than her own; but hoped ſhe would continue in her apartment for that day, becauſe he intended to take leave of her in it. She ſaid all that was proper, to thank his majeſty for the honour he deſigned her.

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The king kept his word, and came in the evening, with many of his court. The ſight of Octavio diſcompoſed her extremely; and his confuſion was much greater. He was returned that day from Aix La Chappelle, and it was a deſire to ſhew him a woman, whom the king thought more beautiful than any he had ever ſeen, that induced his majeſty to propoſe this viſit. The conſternation that appeared in Octavio's countenance, diverted the king, who looked upon it as the effect of Cornelia's charms. He whiſpered to his favorite, "I find your heart will never be proof againſt the power of beauty." Octavio's anſwer was ſo confuſed, that it did not deſtroy his maſter's ſuppoſition; nor indeed did he think of doing it. The king perceived ſome change in Cornelia; but he aſcribed it to the effect of ſurprize and baſhfulneſs, on ſeeing the ſudden impreſſion ſhe had made on Octavio. She was obliged to exert all her command over herſelf, to perform even the neceſſary civilities to her company.

Her uncle found his taſk more difficult. He was ſhocked with ſeeing one whom he had ſo much injured; but was much more troubled by the revival of a paſſion which time had not extinguiſhed. He could not look on Bernardo, without feeling all the pangs of jealouſy. At length, unable to contain himſelf any longer, he went up to Cornelia, as ſoon as he obſerved that all around her were engaged in play, or converſation; and, with fury in his eyes, aſked her, if ſhe deſigned to marry without aſking his conſent. She told him, that he had forfeited all title to duty from her; and that ſhe thought ſhe made him a ſufficient return for any obligations he had once conferred upon her, by not declaring how much

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he had done to cancel them; and chooſing a thouſand hardſhips, and to paſs for a woman of low birth, rather than tell the world it was he who had reduced her to live as ſuch: that her obligation was now to the man, who had ſuffered ſo much, from a deſire of raiſing her above the mean ſtate in which ſhe had appeared, and who was willing to take her, though robbed of all the goods of fortune, and the honours of her birth: that a compliance with the dictates of love and gratitude, were now become her chief duty; but that if he choſe to be on friendly terms with her, ſhe would try to forget what ſhe had always ſo carefully concealed, and henceforward look on him as an uncle.

He anſwered her in a rage, that ſhe had better wait for his conſent to marry, or he would bring ſuch a cloud over her preſent ſunſhine, that it ſhould ſurpaſs her power to diſpel the ſtorm; and that he left her to judge how little able ſhe was of contending with him, notwithſtanding all her ſeeming favour. Having ſaid this in the moſt menacing manner, he left her in no ſmall terror; which was much encreaſed towards the end of the evening; when the king, after having attentively liſtened for a conſiderable time to Octavio, took a very ſlight leave of her, with a viſible alteration in his countenance.

Cornelia detained Madame Du Maine, Mr. and Madame De Rhone, Bernardo, and Mr. De Vaux, after the reſt of the company, and told them what had paſſed between Octavio and her. They had been concerned all the evening, to think how ſhe would ſupport the ſcene; but they were made more ſo now. Bernardo begged, they might be married directly, that their union might

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no longer depend upon chance. None of her friends could ſee any certain proſpect of ſafety for her, if Octavio ſhould be as wicked as he expreſſed himſelf to be, and as his actions had too often declared. She propoſed flying the kingdom. Bernardo joyfully agreed; aſſuring her, he ſhould look upon that to be his country, where ſhe could live with moſt ſafety and eaſe. All their friends were ſatisfied, that it would be beſt for them to take this courſe, for ſome time at leaſt, and that they could not put their deſign into execution too ſpeedily. Cornelia declared ſhe would ſet out that night, and Bernardo ran to prepare every thing neceſſary. Mr. and Madame De Rhone carried Cornelia to their houſe, where ſhe ſtaid till Bernardo came, and told her the conveyance was ready. Theſe affectionate friends took care to ſupply the travellers with money, and whatever neceſſaries their chaiſe could hold; and then took their leaves in the moſt tender manner.

Bernardo and Cornelia travelled with all poſſible ſpeed, happy in the hopes of a certain refuge. They never ſtopped, day nor night, till they arrived at a town within the dominions of Spain. As they had nothing ſo much at heart as their union, they married, as ſoon as they could with ſafety obtain the ſanction of the church. After ſo many diſappointments, it is no wonder they ſhould be too happy in being at laſt united, to think of changing their abode immediately, however inconvenient it might otherwiſe be. From this place they wrote to their friends, to acquaint them with their ſafety and happineſs; and here they received their ſincere congratulations.

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Cornelia had left Maria with a charge to endeavour to get Lucinda out of the convent by ſtealth, and bring her to this town, where they reſolved to ſtay ſome time, and where, if Maria did not find them, ſhe would find farther directions. For as it might, in all probability, be long before they could hope for the completion of this ſcheme, Bernardo and Cornelia thought it would be to no purpoſe to wait near the frontiers for Lucinda; and therefore travelled in queſt of ſome more agreeable and convenient place to ſettle in.

After an unſatisfactory ſearch for ſome time, they at laſt found what ſeemed to anſwer their purpoſe extremely well. The houſe was very plain and ſmall; its chief beauty was its ſituation, which being on a riſing ground, commanded a very delightful and extenſive proſpect on one ſide, and on the other was ſhaded by a fine wood. At the bottom of a hill ran a very beautiful river, which continued its ſerpentine courſe ſo advantageouſly, that it terminated all the lower part of the gardens. In the upper part, were formed ſeveral terraſſes, and ſloping walks, planted on each ſide with the fineſt trees, which afforded at once a moſt agreeable ſhelter from the ſun or wind. Nature had ſcarce left any room for art, in ornamenting this little ſpot, which ſuited the taſte of this happy couple ſo well, that they agreed for the rent directly with the landlord's ſteward, who lived in the houſe and took care of the land belonging to it.

Here they enjoyed all the happineſs they had ever propoſed to themſelves; with this addition, by the news they received a few months after they had ſettled in this place, that Maria had executed

ecuted her commiſſion ſo well, that ſhe had brought Lucinda off ſafe; and would reach Spain almoſt as ſoon as her letter. Bernardo and Cornelia agreed to meet Lucinda, and conduct her to their habitation. When they had got within a little more than half a day's journey of the place where Lucinda was, they were informed that the remaining part of the road was extremely bad, and dangerous for carriages. This made Bernardo inſiſt on Cornelia's proceeding no farther; and that he alone ſhould finiſh the intended journey on horſeback, for which the road would ſerve very well.

He accordingly ſet out next morning. Towards evening, Cornelia walked out to take the air, and amuſe herſelf with the proſpect of the country round about the little town, where ſhe was to wait Bernardo's return. She had inſenſibly walked to ſome diſtance, and was flattering herſelf with the hopes of ſeeing him and Lucinda, when ſhe was met by ſome horſemen, who immediately alighted, ſurrounded her, and told her in civil terms ſhe muſt go with them. She was extremely ſurprized with their addreſs, and inquired where ſhe was to go. One of them anſwered, to the place from whence ſhe came; where ſhe would find that it was happier to live with a good parent, than to undergo the fate of a fugitive. She aſſured them they were miſtaken, that ſhe was not the fugitive they ſuppoſed; that ſhe was married, and expected her husband that evening, the ſight of whom would ſoon convince them of their miſtake. They told her, they knew her extremely well; and that they knew ſhe had a husband; but that ſhe ought to have known, that a parent's conſent was no leſs neceſſary to

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make him properly ſo, than the ceremonies of the church.

Without anſwering any more of her queſtions, they led her to an equipage that waited at a ſmall diſtance, in which they put her. At firſt ſhe had flattered herſelf, that they had miſtaken her for another; but at laſt ſhe began to fear, that they had been employed by her uncle, to bring her back to him. The thought filled her with horrour; and ſhe remained in the greateſt anguiſh and perplexity of mind, both for herſelf and for Bernardo; who, ſhe knew, muſt be miſerable, when, upon his return, he found her miſſing.

Her only comfort was to find, that though ſhe had been carried off unjuſtly and violently, yet ſhe met with nothing but reſpectful behaviour during her journey. She was entirely unacquainted with the road ſhe travelled. She did not even know whether ſhe was in France, or Spain; but ſhe feared the former. It was late in the night before ſhe came to any inn, and when ſhe alighted, ſhe was ſurprized to find the innkeeper accoſt her in Spaniſh. She could not underſtand how ſhe ſhould ſtill be on Spaniſh ground, and was more ſurprized than ever, when, upon enquiry, ſhe found ſhe was in the road to Madrid. This revived her hopes of having been miſtaken for ſome other woman, and the fear of her uncle ſubſided.

Her guides, or rather guards, had charged the landlady not to give her pen and ink, or in any way accommodate her with materials for writing; but the woman being naturally good-natured, and touched with the grief in which Cornelia ſeemed to be, when ſhe firſt entered the houſe, and

and with the ſweetneſs and affability of her behaviour, readily complied with her requeſt, and brought her pen, ink and paper, in ſpite of all the injunctions to the contrary.

Cornelia wrote two letters to Bernardo, one directed to the place where he had left her; and the other to their own houſe. She informed him of the manner in which ſhe had been deprived of the joy of receiving him, and of her ſuſpicion of ſome miſtake. She told him, that though ſhe received, in other reſpects, very civil uſage from her guards, yet ſhe could not obtain an anſwer to any queſtion ſhe aſked. All the intelligence ſhe could give him, was the name of the place from whence ſhe wrote, and from which ſhe underſtood ſhe was to depart by break of day for Madrid. She alſo wrote to Madame Du Maine, and Madame De Rhone, to the ſame purpoſe. She then engaged her landlady's promiſe to carry theſe letters ſecretly to the next poſt-houſe. She found no inclination to ſleep; and indeed the vigilance of her conductors would ſcarce have allowed her time for it.

They ſet out by break of day, as they had propoſed. But we muſt leave them in their road, to give ſome account of Bernardo's ſituation.

He arrived late at the inn with Lucinda. They both alighted full of the moſt pleaſing expectations. But, to their inexpreſſible diſappointment, ſurprize, and grief, they were told, that Cornelia had not been ſeen nor heard of, from the time ſhe went out to take a walk an hour or two before ſun-ſet. Upon farther examination, they were informed, that ſome men had been there in the morning, and had enquired, if a young gentleman

man and lady had ſtopped there; and had been told, that two ſuch perſons as they deſcribed, came to the inn the night before. They then asked ſeveral particular queſtions, as to the ſtature, complexion, and appearance of the lady; all which had agreed ſo well with what the people of the inn had obſerved of Cornelia, that no doubt remained of her being the lady they ſought. This account relieved Bernardo's fears for her life, but raiſed others in him for her liberty; apprehending, as ſhe herſelf had done, that this villainous ſcheme had been the work of Octavio.

Upon this ſuppoſition, he took poſt for France, hoping to overtake Cornelia, or at leaſt to meet with Octavio at Paris, and revenge the injury, if he could not reſcue her. As he reached Paris, he went to conſult with Mr. De Rhone, as to the manner in which he ſhould proceed. Mr. De Rhone was glad to eaſe him of part of his fears, by aſſuring him of the improbability of Octavio's having been employed in the execution of any ſuch deſign, he having at preſent matters of a more immediate concern to engage all his care and attention; it being certain, that he had loſt the king's favour, after having ſo long engroſſed it; and that it was generally believed, that all his attempts to regain it would prove vain. This would have been no diſagreeable news to Bernardo at any other time; but his thoughts were then ſo entirely engaged about finding his Cornelia, that the proſpect that opened to him of recovering her eſtate, and aſſerting her birth, did not give him a moment's joy. But the next day brought him ſome degree of happineſs, with Cornelia's letter to Mr. De Rhone. Bernardo immediately

mediately took leave of his friend, and ſet out poſt for his own houſe in Spain, where he expected to find farther intelligence.

Cornelia being now every day more ſatisfied, that ſome miſtake was the cauſe of the unlucky accident, which had at firſt ſo much alarmed her, travelled on with more eaſe of mind for herſelf; and flattered herſelf, that Bernardo would be made quiet by her letters. She was, after a journey of four days, brought to a magnificent houſe near Madrid, where ſhe was received in a very ſolemn manner by all the domeſticks. Convinced that ſhe was brought thither by miſtake, ſhe could ſcarce forbear laughing under her veil, to think of the ſurprize her lifting it up would cauſe. She found, however, that this was not to be done immediately; for ſhe was put into an empty room, and left alone a conſiderable time.

At laſt a gentleman and lady entered with very ſtern countenances, and began to reproach her for her unworthy behaviour and diſobedience. Cornelia having no great deſire to hear what they could ſay on a ſubject of ſo little moment to her, choſe to undeceive them as ſoon as poſſible, and, lifting up her veil, at once ſtopped their harangue, and rendered them incapable of expreſſing even their ſurprize, otherwiſe than by their looks. She told them, how ſhe had been ſeized and brought there, and how impoſſible ſhe found it to convince thoſe who had conducted her of their miſtake.

The gentleman, whoſe name was Cornaro, and his lady, were too much diſappointed to make any anſwer immediately. But, as ſoon as they had a little recovered their ſurprize, they, with great politeneſs, endeavoured to excuſe the behaviour

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of their people, and acknowledged their own fault in ſending perſons in ſearch of their daughter, that had never ſeen her. Cornaro ſaid, that in the midſt of the confuſion and grief, occaſioned by the flight of his daughter, he had choſen men that knew the country well, and thought the deſcription given them, had been ſo exact, that no miſtake could happen. The old gentleman and his lady entertained Cornelia with the utmoſt civility, and begged they might in ſome meaſure recompence her for the trouble ſhe had had, by ſhewing her Madrid and its diverſions.

She was too much fatigued with her journey to return home immediately; and therefore willingly accepted of their invitation. She wrote to Bernardo, and, at the deſire of Signior Cornaro and his lady, begged him and Lucinda to come to Madrid. Cornaro's daughter was ſo much of the ſize and ſhape of Cornelia, that, by borrowing her cloaths, ſhe was very well equipped, according to the faſhion of the country. As ſoon as Bernardo received her letter, he ſet out with Lucinda, and made Cornelia happy by his arrival in leſs time than ſhe expected.

Cornaro and his lady prevailed on them to appear at Madrid. When Bernardo and Cornelia were introduced at court, they excited the admiration of all beholders; ſo beautiful a couple had never been ſeen there. Their perſons, their behaviour, and the reſpect every one had for Cornaro, occaſioned their receiving very great civilities from moſt people of diſtinction, who ſeemed deſirous to ſhew them Madrid to the greateſt advantage. But none appeared ſo much pleaſed as the queen. She careſſed Cornelia extremely, and

begged, if ſhe and Bernardo continued in Spain, that they would make Madrid the place of their reſidence.

But this public way of life was little ſuited to their taſtes. They ſoon began, amidſt the entertainments now provided for them, to long after their ſolitude, and the uninterrupted enjoyment of each others converſation. But they were detained from gratifying this inclination for ſome time longer. A letter from Mr. De Rhone informed them, that Octavio was in great diſgrace with the king, and baniſhed from court; and he preſſed them to come and claim Cornelia's fortune, and aſſert her birth. They determined to follow his advice; but Cornelia would not leave Spain, till ſhe had reconciled Cornaro and his lady to their daughter.

Bernardo, in his road to Madrid, had obſerved, at a place where he ſtopped, a young lady and gentleman, who ſeemed careful to conceal themſelves. The young lady's reſemblance to Cornelia, made it probable, that ſhe might be the perſon for whom Cornelia had been taken. Bernardo, thinking he might have an opportunity of doing her ſervice with her father and mother, deſired leave to ſpeak to her, and told her the occaſion of his journey; adding, that if ſhe was the lady he ſuppoſed, ſhe might command him in any thing wherein ſhe thought he might be uſeful to her. She replied, that his offers were too generous, not to deſerve ſincerity from her; that ſhe was the perſon he imagined, and ſhould be eternally obliged to him, if he could obtain the forgiveneſs of her parents, for having married without their conſent; and that in every point,

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wherein her happineſs was not ſo nearly concerned, they ſhould find her all obedience. Bernardo and Cornelia employed their utmoſt endeavours, to conquer the reſentment of the rigid parents; and at length ſucceeded ſo well, as to obtain a pardon for the new-married couple, and leave to come and throw themſelves at the old gentleman's and lady's feet. This was ſoon followed by a perfect reconciliation.

Bernardo had yet one care remaining, which was to find out Sylvia's relations, and to obtain from them the fortune to which her mother had a right. By the interpoſition of the queen, this was effected. Poor Sylvia got hereby a ſum ſufficient to afford her, and all the little family, a very eaſy independency, eſpecially in the hands of one who underſtood œconomy ſo well.

Bernardo and Cornelia then took their leaves of thoſe, from whom they had received ſo many civilities, and ſet out for France to attend their own affairs. Mr. and Madame De Rhone met them, and they conſulted together in what manner they ſhould proceed. Mr. De Rhone undertook to obtain an audience of the king for Bernardo; in which he ſhould relate to his majeſty, the treatment Cornelia had met with from Octavio, and aſk permiſſion for her to claim her right.

In the mean time, as Cornelia would not delay any pleaſure in her power to beſtow on a friend, ſhe went to Sylvia; whom ſhe found in the ſame way of life, in which ſhe had left her. Cornelia had cultivated an intimacy with her before ſhe left Paris, and they had afterwards correſponded. Sylvia was extremely rejoiced to hear the ſucceſs of her friend's endeavours, and expreſſed her

gratitude in the moſt affecting manner. As a very ſmall independency had been the utmoſt of her wiſhes, ſhe was now completely happy.

Devaux had, from the firſt time he ſaw her, conceived a particular affection for her, and would have married her, if he had not feared his fortune would prove inſufficient to maintain ſo large a family. But now that they were provided for, he began to make his addreſſes to her, and would gladly have prevailed on her to accept of his hand and fortune. But ſhe could not be induced to conſent. She declared, that if ſhe ever married, ſhe was reſolved it ſhould not be till her brothers and ſiſters had out-grown her care; for that at preſent their education was employment enough for her; and ſhe had never yet ſeen the man ſhe liked well enough, to engage her to change this reſolution. Bernardo found the king very well inclined to hear him, and to admit the juſtice of his claim. Meaſures were immediately taken to diſpoſſeſs Octavio of his niece's eſtate. Her birth was publickly declared, and all the civilities and carreſſes, ſhe had before ſo publickly received, were now renewed.

Madame De La Roche had no excuſe remaining for her anger. She therefore acquieſced, and congratulated her ſon and Cornelia with ſeeming good will; and what was of more moment to them, ſhe conſented to leave Lucinda to the care of her brother.

Octavio defended himſelf as long as the chicanery of the law would permit. But the proofs of his baſeneſs were too ſtrong to be reſiſted. Cornelia's claim was ſoon decided according to juſtice.

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This being ſettled, Bernardo and ſhe went to her houſe, accompanied by Madame Du Maine, Mr. and Madame De Rhone, Lucinda, Sylvia and her family.

Octavio had improved the place, which was before charming. The houſe was fine, and very elegantly furniſhed; the gardens and park were extremely beautiful and extenſive, and diverſified with lawns and woods to the greateſt advantage. The park reached to the ſea. Not far from the houſe, was a navigable river, which formed a fine and well frequented harbour for ſhips. A ſmall river ran thro' the gardens and park, in the moſt beautiful meanders, and formed ſeveral delightful caſcades. The buildings and grottos in the gardens were finely executed, and judiciouſly placed.

The joy of all the poor people of the neighbourhood, who remembred, and had long mourned the loſs of their benefactreſs, was extreme, their intereſt and gratitude being equally concerned. For Octavio had ſhewn little regard to Cornelia's requeſt, about the continuance of her charities. Theſe were now doubled, the increaſe of Bernardo's fortune making it convenient. For Madame De La Roche died ſoon after ſhe had been reconciled to her ſon: and by her death he inherited a very conſiderable fortune.

Bernardo and Cornelia equally felt the exquiſite joy of making all thoſe, to whom their power could extend, as happy as their tempers would permit. They were particularly attentive to the education of the great numbers of children they took under their care, and they had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing this care rewarded by ſucceſs.

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Their neighbourhood, in a few years, was ſtocked with an honeſt induſtrious race, happy in themſelves, and uſeful to their country.

The generoſity of this amiable couple was not confined to thoſe, who ſtood abſolutely in need of ſubſiſtence; but extended often to the conveniencies of others, who wanted ſome addition to their fortune, to make them perfectly eaſy.

Whilſt they were thus endeavouring to promote the happineſs of all around them, they themſelves enjoyed a felicity, which nothing but the moſt exalted virtue can give. Their conſtant ſtudy to advance in every perfection of the heart or underſtanding, and the daily progreſs they obſerved in each other, was a continual ſource of delight to them. They remained not long without an increaſe of family. The education of their offspring was the great object of their attention; they were watchful over their young minds almoſt from their birth, and were indefatigable in forming them to the love of truth and virtue. They were amply rewarded by the ſucceſs of their endeavours; and ſome of their children have diſtinguiſhed themſelves among the firſt in merit and genius in France.

Bernardo and Cornelia thus paſſed their lives in the enjoyment of every ſocial happineſs, and in the higheſt public reſpect and applauſe. They were honoured by all who ever heard of them, and beloved by every one who had a nearer knowledge of them. They lived many years together, without the leaſt abatement of their affections, or their happineſs. Their love and eſteem for each other was rather ſtrengthened by time, and the many endearing ties that ſubſiſted between them.

They

They long enjoyed their deareſt friends. Madame Du Maine came to live with them, and made an agreeable addition to their ſociety, till by her great age they were obliged to reſign her to the neceſſary fate of mortality. Mr. and Madame De Rhone lived in a conſtant courſe of bliſs, and continued to their lateſt breaths, the tender friends of Cornelia and Bernardo. Lucinda married a gentleman of great worth, with whom ſhe lived happy enough to converſe with her friends without envy. Sylvia lived many years in Cornelia's neighbourhood, happy in her friendſhip, and in her own merit, excellent diſpoſitions and underſtanding.

Octavio tried all the ways an ingenious courtier could invent, to reinſtate himſelf in his ſovereign's favour. But meeting with conſtant diſappointments, and finding himſelf avoided by every one, even by thoſe who had paid moſt court to him during his proſperity, he found too late, that tho' power may bring flatterers and dependants, merit alone can create friends. Theſe mortifications diſguſted him ſo much of the world, that he retired among the Capuchins. But he ſoon found that neither his mind, nor conſcience were fit for ſolitude. At length he fell into a lingering diſeaſe, which increaſing daily, he ſent for Cornelia, and begged her forgiveneſs. She did what ſhe could to relieve him in his laſt moments, but all in vain. He died melancholy, in a few weeks, after having bequeathed her the ſmall remains of his fortune.

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